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THE  
ILIAD OF HOMER.

*TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BLANK VERSE*

BY

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

TWO VOLUMES IN ONE



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THE ILIAD OF HOMER.

VOL. I.



## PREFACE.

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HAVING now nearly completed my translation of the Iliad of Homer, I sit down to write the Preface, that it may be prefixed to the first volume. To this task of translation, which I began in 1865, I afterwards gave myself the more willingly because it helped in some measure to divert my mind from a great domestic sorrow. I am not sure that, when it shall be concluded, it may not cost me some regret to part with so interesting a companion as the old Greek poet, whose thoughts I have, for four years past, been occupied, though with interruptions, in the endeavor to transfer from his own grand and musical Greek to our less sonorous but still manly and flexible tongue.

In what I shall say of my own translation I do not mean to speak in disparagement of any of the previous English versions of the Iliad, nor to extenuate my obligations to some of them. I acknowledge that although Homer is, as Cowper has well observed, the most perspicuous of poets, I have been sometimes, perhaps often, guided by the labors of my predecessors to a better mode of dealing with certain refractory passages of my author than I should otherwise have found. Let me, without detracting from their merits, state what I have endeavored to do. I have endeavored to be strictly faithful in my rendering ; to add nothing of my own, and to give the reader, so far as our language

would allow, all that I found in the original. There are, however, in Homer, frequently recurring, certain expressions which are merely a kind of poetical finery, introduced when they are convenient to fill out a line or to give it a sonorous termination, and omitted when they are not needed for this purpose. The Greeks, for example, almost whenever they are spoken of, are magnanimous, or valiant, or warlike, or skilled in taming steeds : the Trojans are magnanimous also, and valiant, and warlike, and equally eminent in horsemanship. The warriors of the Iliad are all sons of some magnanimous or warlike parent. Achilles is the son of Peleus, and Peleus is magnanimous ; and these epithets are repeated upon page after page throughout the poem. Achilles is spoken of as swift-footed or godlike almost whenever he appears, and sometimes is honored by both epithets. Hector is illustrious, and knightly, and distinguished by his beany crest. Even the coxcomb Paris, for whom Homer seems to entertain a proper contempt, is godlike. These complimentary additions to the name of the warrior are, however, dispensed with whenever the hexameter is rounded to a well-sounding conclusion without them. Where they appear in the Greek, I have in nearly all instances retained them, making Achilles swift-footed and Ulysses fertile in resources, to the end of the poem ; but in a very few cases, where they embarrassed the versification, I have used the liberty taken by Homer himself, and left them out. Everywhere else it has been my rule not to exclude from the translation anything which I found in the text of my author.

There is another point in regard to which I have taken equal pains, and which seems to me equally important. I have endeavored to preserve the simplicity of style which distinguishes the old Greek poet, who

wrote for the popular ear and according to the genius of his language, and I have chosen such English as offers no violence to the ordinary usages and structure of our own. I have sought to attain what belongs to the original, — a fluent narrative style, which shall carry the reader forward without the impediment of unexpected inversions and capricious phrases, and in which, if he find nothing to stop at and admire, there will at least be nothing to divert his attention from the story and the characters of the poem, from the events related and the objects described. I think that not many readers of the present day would agree with Pope, who, as Spence relates, after remarking that he had nothing to say for rhyme, went on to observe that he doubted whether a poem could be supported without it in our language, unless it were stiffened with such strange words as would destroy our language itself. It is remarkable that this should have been said by one who had given the reading world an edition of Shakespeare, in whose dramas are to be found passages of blank-verse which might be instanced as the perfection of that form of versification, — not to be excelled in sweetness of modulation, and grace and freedom of language, — without a single harsh inversion, or any of that clumsy stiffening which Pope so disapproved, yet seemed to think so necessary. The other dramatists of the Elizabethan period also supply examples of the same noble simplicity of language and construction, suited to the highest poetry. In this translation the natural order of the words has been carefully preserved, as far as the exigencies of versification would allow, and I have ventured only upon those easy deviations from it which form no interruptions to the sense, and at most only remind the reader that he is reading verse.

I have chosen blank-verse for this reason among

others, that it enabled me to keep more closely to the original in my rendering, without any sacrifice either of ease or of spirit in the expression. The use of rhyme in a translation is a constant temptation to petty infidelities, and to the employment of expressions which have an air of constraint, and do not the most adequately convey the thought. I had my reasons also for not adopting the ballad measure, which some have thought to allow the nearest approach to the manner of Homer. There are, it is true, certain affinities between the style of Homer and that of the old ballad poems of Great Britain. Both were the productions of a rude age; both were composed to be sung to public audiences; and this gave occasion to certain characteristics in which they resemble each other. But the Homeric poems, as it seems to me, are beyond the popular ballads of any modern nation in reach of thought and in richness of phraseology; and if I had adopted that form of poetry there would have been, besides the disadvantage of rhyme, a temptation to make the version conform in style and spirit to the old ballads of our own literature, in a degree which the original does not warrant, and which, as I think, would lead to some sacrifice of its dignity. I did not adopt the hexameter verse, principally for the reason that in our language it is confessedly an imperfect form of versification, the true rhythm of which it is difficult for those whose ear is accustomed only to our ordinary metres to perceive. I found that I could not possibly render the Greek hexameters line for line, like Voss in his marvellous German version, in which he has not only done this, but generally preserved the pauses in the very part of the line in which Homer placed them. We have so many short words in English, and so few of the connective particles which are lavishly used by Homer, that often when I

reached the end of the Greek line I found myself only in the middle of my line in English. This difficulty of subduing the thought — by compression or expansion of phrase — to the limits it must fill would alone have been sufficient to deter me from attempting a translation in hexameters. I therefore fell back upon blank-verse, which has been the vehicle of some of the noblest poetry in our language ; both because it seemed to me by the flexibility of its construction best suited to a narrative poem, and because, while it enabled me to give the sense of my author more perfectly than any other form of verse, it allowed me also to avoid in a greater degree the appearance of constraint which is too apt to belong to a translation.

I make no apology for employing in my version the names Jupiter, Juno, Venus, and others of Latin origin, for Zeus, Here, Aphrodite, and other Greek names of the deities of whom Homer speaks. The names which I have adopted have been naturalized in our language for centuries, and some of them, as Mercury, Vulcan, and Dian, have even been provided with English terminations. I was translating from Greek into English, and I therefore translated the names of the gods, as well as the other parts of the poem.

In explanation of what may appear to some readers an unauthorized abridgment of the famous simile of the moon and stars at the end of the Eighth Book, I will mention here, by way of note, — the only one which I shall have occasion to make, — that in translating I have omitted two lines of the text, which the best critics regard as not properly belonging to it, but as transferred by some interpolator from another simile in the Sixteenth Book, where they are found in their proper place.

In the intimate acquaintance with the *Iliad* which

the work of translation has given me, an impression has been revived which was made upon my mind when in my boyhood I first read that poem in an English version. I recollect very well the eager curiosity with which I seized upon the translation of Pope when it came within my reach, and with what avidity I ran through the pages which rendered into our language what was acknowledged to be the greatest production of poetic genius that the world had seen. I read with a deep interest for the fate of Troy, and with a kindly feeling toward Hector, whose part I took warmly against the bloodthirsty Achilles; and great as might have been the guilt of Paris, I read with an earnest wish that Troy might be delivered from its besiegers. When I came to the end of the poem, I laid it down with a feeling of disappointment. I was not told, save in certain dim predictions, what became of Troy, which the Greeks had mustered from so many regions to besiege, nor what was the fate of the mild and venerable Priam, and the aged Hecuba, and Andromache, the gentle and affectionate wife, and her infant son, — personages for whose fortunes the poet had so powerfully awakened my concern and my curiosity. Helen, to recover whom the war was waged, was still in Troy, and Paris, her effeminate husband, was still alive and unharmed. Why the Trojans, who hated Paris — why Hector and the other sons of Priam, who disapproved of their brother's conduct — why Priam himself, who is never said to have approved of it, did not insist that the seducer should restore Helen to her first and proper husband, for whom she seems to have still entertained a lingering regard, I could never imagine. Particularly strange it seemed that Paris was not forced by his countrymen to give up Helen after the combat between him and Menelaus, in which he was clearly overcome,

and by the terms of the solemn treaty which preceded the duel was bound to restore his stolen bride and her wealth to the Greeks. The poet has chosen to leave that circumstance without adequate explanation. The breaking of the truce by Pandarus, and the sudden renewal of the war in consequence, does not explain it, for afterwards, in the Seventh Book, we have Antenor proposing, in council, to restore Helen and her wealth, as a certain way of ending the war, — a proposal which is not adopted simply because Paris objects to it. Paris would not consent to restore Helen, and the Trojan princes and leaders, as if Paris were their absolute monarch, allowed him to have his way, and to prolong a war which Hector foresaw — as he says in the famous interview with Andromache — was to end in the destruction of Troy. The impression to which I refer has been confirmed by the minute study which I have recently made of the poem. I can make nothing of it but a detached chapter of the poetic history of the Trojan war, — an episode in the narrative of that long siege which was to be concluded by a greater event than any recorded in the *Iliad*, the taking of the city of Troy ; — a work of an inexhaustible imagination, with characters vigorously drawn and finely discriminated, and incidents rapidly succeeding each other and infinitely diversified, — everywhere a noble simplicity, mellifluous numbers, and images of beauty and grandeur ; yet everywhere indications that the poem had a continuation. It is full of references to events which are yet to be related, and provokes a desire for further disclosures, which it fails to gratify. There are frequent allusions to the brief term of life allotted to Achilles, and several, one of which I have already mentioned, to the final capture of Troy. Thetis predicts that her son, perishing almost immediately after taking the life

of Hector, will not live to see the fall of the besieged city. The audiences before whom the books of the *Iliad* were recited by the minstrels would naturally say : " You speak of the capture of Troy ; tell us how it was taken at last. Achilles, the mightiest of warriors, you say, was to be slain soon after the death of Hector. Relate the manner of his death, and how it was received by the Greeks and the Trojans. Describe his funeral, as you described those of his friend Patroclus and his adversary Hector. Tell us what became of Andromache, and Astyanax, her son, and all the royal family of Priam." Thus may we suppose that, until Aristotle arose to demonstrate the contrary, the fable of the *Iliad* must have appeared to the general mind to be incomplete.

Let me say a word or two of the personage whom the critics call the hero of the *Iliad*. Achilles is ill-used by Agamemnon, the general-in-chief of the Greeks, — and so far he has the sympathy of the reader ; but he is a ferocious barbarian at best, and as the narrative proceeds, he loses all title to our interest. His horrid prayer that the Greeks may be slaughtered by thousands until they learn to despise a monarch who has done him a personal injury, and his inhuman delight in the havoc made of them by the Trojans under Hector, cause us to turn from him with the horror and aversion due to a selfish and cruel nature which imposes no reserve or restraint upon its own impulses. His warm affection for his gentle friend and companion, Patroclus, partly restores him to our favor ; but his pitiless treatment of the Trojans who supplicate him for quarter, and his capture of twelve Trojan youths in order to cut their throats at the funeral pile of Patroclus, as he afterwards does in cold blood, bring back our disgust ; and when Hector with his dying voice warns him of his approaching

death, the reader has no objection to offer. If Achilles be the hero of the poem, the poet has not succeeded in obtaining for him either our good opinion or our good wishes. In the fortunes of Hector, however, whose temper is noble and generous, who while grieving at the crime of Paris defends his country with all his valor, whose character is as gentle and affectionate as it is spirited and manly, it is impossible for the reader not to feel a strong interest. The last book of the *Iliad* relates the recovery of his dead body from the Greeks, and the celebration of his funeral in Troy. In this book, also, the character of Achilles appears less unamiable, since he grants the rites of hospitality to Priam, and is persuaded by his entreaties to restore, for a princely ransom, the dead body of Hector, contrary to his first resolution. It is to be observed, however, that he is moved to this, not by his own native magnanimity, but by considerations which indirectly relate to himself, — that is to say, by being artfully led to think of his own father, Peleus, an aged man like Priam, anxiously waiting in his distant palace for the return of his son from the war, and fearing that he may never behold him again. Once in the interview with Priam the fierce and brutal nature of Achilles breaks out in threats, which terrify the old king into silence. Priam is himself warned by the gods that he is not safe in remaining overnight in the tent of Achilles, and, lest he should not be protected from the ferocity of Agamemnon, withdraws by stealth in the darkness and returns to Troy.

I have no answer to make to those who regard it as a blemish in the great work of Homer that he represents the gods in their dealings with men as governed, for the most part, by motives either mean and base, or frivolous and childish. In the Trojan war everything happens by their direction or their prompting. In the sys-

tem of Homer it is they who stir up men to strife, who bring on the battles, promote the slaughter, and bring it to an end, urge the personages of the fable to ruinous follies and imprudences, and give or withhold victory at their pleasure ; and in all this their rule is not one of justice and beneficence, but of caprice. Their favor is purchased by hecatombs, and their hatred incurred by acts which have no moral quality that should give offence to an upright judge. They are debauched, mercenary, rapacious, and cruel ; they dwell in a world in which the rules of right and the maxims necessary to the well-being of human society find no recognition. It was for this reason that Plato, the earliest author of an *Index expurgatorius*, forbade the circulation of the writings of the Greek poets in his imaginary commonwealth.

Yet let me say this in favor of my author, that in one part of the poem the absolute rectitude of the Divine government is solemnly recognized. In the Third Book of the Iliad, a truce is agreed upon between the Trojans and the Greeks, while Menelaus and Paris are to decide by single combat the quarrel which has occasioned the siege of Troy. A compact is made, according to which the victor is to possess Helen and her wealth, and the Trojans and Greeks are ever afterward to remain friends and allies. The gods are invoked to be witnesses of the treaty, and to pursue with their vengeance those by whom it shall be violated, whether they be Greeks or Trojans. Few passages in the Iliad are more striking or of graver import than this appeal to the justice of the gods, — this testimony, given by two warring nations, of their confidence in the equity with which the immortals govern the world. Paris is overcome by Menelaus in the combat ; the truce is broken by a Trojan, who wounds Menelaus severely ; the treaty

is not fulfilled by delivering up Helen ; and, as the action of the poem proceeds in the next book, Agamemnon exhorts the Greeks to fight valiantly, in the full assurance that Jupiter and the other gods will never permit treachery to remain unpunished ; and accordingly he predicts a terrible retribution already hanging over Troy. And whatever may be our admiration for the amiable and noble qualities of Hector, and our sympathy for the thousands of innocent persons dwelling in his populous city, it cannot be denied that the interference of the gods in the affairs of Troy leads in the end to a great result consistent with substantial justice. Paris, the violator of the laws of hospitality, the adulterer and robber, is sheltered, protected, and countenanced in Troy, — the Trojan people make themselves partakers in his guilt ; and in the end they share in its punishment. Hector, the prop of their state, the champion in whom they put their trust, is slain ; and we are allowed, by means of predictions, a glimpse of the coming destruction of Troy, and learn that the sceptre of the kingdom will pass from the house of Priam, whose son committed the crime which led to the war, and will be swayed by the posterity of the blameless Æneas.

Here I leave my translation in the hands of the reading public, who, if they do not wholly neglect it, will judge whether I have made any approach toward the fulfilment of the design set forth in the beginning of this Preface.

W. C. BRYANT.

DECEMBER, 1869.



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# THE ILIAD.



## BOOK I.

**O** GODDESS! sing the wrath of Peleus' son,  
Achilles; sing the deadly wrath that brought  
Woes numberless upon the Greeks, and swept  
To Hades many a valiant soul, and gave  
Their limbs a prey to dogs and birds of air, — 5  
For so had Jove appointed, — from the time  
When the two chiefs, Atrides, king of men,  
And great Achilles, parted first as foes.

Which of the gods put strife between the chiefs,  
That they should thus contend? Latona's son 10  
And Jove's. Incensed against the king, he bade  
A deadly pestilence appear among  
The army, and the men were perishing.  
For Atreus' son with insult had received  
Chryses the priest, who to the Grecian fleet 15  
Came to redeem his daughter, offering  
Uncounted ransom. In his hand he bore  
The fillets of Apollo, archer-god,  
Upon the golden sceptre, and he sued

To all the Greeks, but chiefly to the sons 20  
Of Atreus, the two leaders of the host :—

“Ye sons of Atreus, and ye other chiefs,  
Well-greaved Achæians, may the gods who dwell  
Upon Olympus give you to o’erthrow  
The city of Priam, and in safety reach 25  
Your homes ; but give me my beloved child,  
And take her ransom, honoring him who sends  
His arrows far, Apollo, son of Jove.”

Then all the other Greeks, applauding, bade  
Revere the priest and take the liberal gifts 30  
He offered, but the counsel did not please  
Atreides Agamemnon ; he dismissed  
The priest with scorn, and added threatening words :—

“Old man, let me not find thee loitering here,  
Beside the roomy ships, or coming back 35  
Hereafter, lest the fillet thou dost bear  
And sceptre of thy god protect thee not.  
This maiden I release not till old age  
Shall overtake her in my Argive home,  
Far from her native country, where her hand 40  
Shall throw the shuttle and shall dress my couch.  
Go, chafe me not, if thou wouldst safely go.”

He spake ; the aged man in fear obeyed  
The mandate, and in silence walked apart,  
Along the many-sounding ocean-side, 45  
And fervently he prayed the monarch-god,  
Apollo, golden-haired Latona’s son :—

“Hear me, thou bearer of the silver bow,

Who guardest Chrysa, and the holy isle  
Of Cilla, and art lord in Tenedos, 50  
O Smintheus! if I ever helped to deck  
Thy glorious temple, if I ever burned  
Upon thy altar the fat thighs of goats  
And bullocks, grant my prayer, and let thy shafts  
Avenge upon the Greeks the tears I shed." 55

So spake he supplicating, and to him  
Phœbus Apollo hearkened. Down he came,  
Down from the summit of the Olympian mount,  
Wrathful in heart; his shoulders bore the bow  
And hollow quiver; there the arrows rang 60  
Upon the shoulders of the angry god,  
As on he moved. He came as comes the night,  
And, seated from the ships aloof, sent forth  
An arrow; terrible was heard the clang  
Of that resplendent bow. At first he smote 65  
The mules and the swift dogs, and then on man  
He turned the deadly arrow. All around  
Glared evermore the frequent funeral piles.  
Nine days already had his shafts been showered  
Among the host, and now, upon the tenth, 70  
Achilles called the people of the camp  
To council. Juno, of the snow-white arms,  
Had moved his mind to this, for she beheld  
With sorrow that the men were perishing.  
And when the assembly met and now was full, 75  
Stood swift Achilles in the midst and said:—

“To me it seems, Atrides, that ’t were well,

Since now our aim is baffled, to return  
 Homeward, if death o'ertake us not ; for war  
 And pestilence at once destroy the Greeks. 80  
 But let us first consult some seer or priest,  
 Or dream-interpreter, — for even dreams  
 Are sent by Jove, — and ask him by what cause  
 Phœbus Apollo has been angered thus ;  
 If by neglected vows or hecatombs, 84  
 And whether savor of fat bulls and goats  
 May move the god to stay the pestilence."

He spake, and took again his seat ; and next  
 Rose Calchas, son of Thestor, and the chief  
 Of augurs, one to whom were known things past 90  
 And present and to come. He, through the art  
 Of divination, which Apollo gave,  
 Had guided Iliumward the ships of Greece.  
 With words well ordered courteously he spake : —

"Achilles, loved of Jove, thou biddest me 95  
 Explain the wrath of Phœbus, monarch-god,  
 Who sends afar his arrows. Willingly  
 Will I make known the cause ; but covenant thou,  
 And swear to stand prepared, by word and hand,  
 To bring me succor. For my mind misgives 100  
 That he who rules the Argives, and to whom  
 The Achaian race are subject, will be wroth.  
 A sovereign is too strong for humbler men,  
 And though he keep his choler down awhile,  
 It rankles, till he sate it, in his heart. 105  
 And now consider : wilt thou hold me safe ? "

Achilles, the swift-footed, answered thus : —  
“ Fear nothing, but speak boldly out whate’er  
Thou knowest, and declare the will of Heaven.  
For by Apollo, dear to Jove, whom thou, 11  
Calchas, dost pray to, when thou givest forth  
The sacred oracles to men of Greece,  
No man, while yet I live, and see the light  
Of day, shall lay a violent hand on thee  
Among our roomy ships ; no man of all 115  
The Grecian armies, though thou name the name  
Of Agamemnon, whose high boast it is  
To stand in power and rank above them all.”

Encouraged thus, the blameless seer went on : —  
“ ’T is not neglected vows or hecatombs 120  
That move him, but the insult shown his priest,  
Whom Agamemnon spurned, when he refused  
To set his daughter free, and to receive  
Her ransom. Therefore sends the archer-god  
These woes, and still will send them on the Greeks, 125  
Nor ever will withdraw his heavy hand  
From our destruction, till the dark-eyed maid  
Freely, and without ransom, be restored  
To her beloved father, and with her  
A sacred hecatomb to Chrysa sent. 130  
So may we haply pacify the god.”

Thus having said, the augur took his seat.  
And then the hero-son of Atreus rose,  
Wide-ruling Agamemnon, greatly chafed.  
His gloomy heart was full of wrath, his eyes 135

Sparkled like fire ; he fixed a menacing look  
Full on the augur Calchas, and began : —

“ Prophet of evil ! never hadst thou yet  
A cheerful word for me. To mark the signs  
Of coming mischief is thy great delight. 140  
Good dost thou ne’er foretell nor bring to pass.  
And now thou pratest, in thine auguries,  
Before the Greeks, how that the archer-god  
Afflicts us thus, because I would not take  
The costly ransom offered to redeem 145  
The virgin child of Chryses. ’T was my choice  
To keep her with me, for I prize her more  
Than Clytemnestra, bride of my young years,  
And deem her not less nobly graced than she,  
In form and feature, mind and pleasing arts. 150  
Yet will I give her back, if that be best ;  
For gladly would I see my people saved  
From this destruction. Let meet recompense,  
Meantime, be ready, that I be not left,  
Alone of all the Greeks, without my prize. 155  
That were not seemly. All of you perceive  
That now my share of spoil has passed from me.”

To him the great Achilles, swift of foot,  
Replied : “ Renowned Atrides, greediest  
Of men, where wilt thou that our noble Greeks 160  
Find other spoil for thee, since none is set  
Apart, a common store ? The trophies brought  
From towns which we have sacked have all been  
shared

Among us, and we could not without shame  
Bid every warrior bring his portion back. 165  
Yield, then, the maiden to the god, and we,  
The Achaians, freely will appoint for thee  
Threefold and fourfold recompense, should Jove  
Give up to sack this well-defended Troy."

Then the king Agamemnon answered thus :— 170  
"Nay, use no craft, all valiant as thou art,  
Godlike Achilles ; thou hast not the power  
To circumvent nor to persuade me thus.  
Think'st thou that, while thou keepest safe thy prize,  
I shall sit idly down, deprived of mine ? 175  
Thou bid'st me give the maiden back. 'T is well,  
If to my hands the noble Greeks shall bring  
The worth of what I lose, and in a shape  
That pleases me. Else will I come myself,  
And seize and bear away thy prize, or that 180  
Of Ajax or Ulysses, leaving him  
From whom I take his share with cause for rage.  
Another time we will confer of this.  
Now come, and forth into the great salt sea  
Launch a black ship, and muster on the deck 185  
Men skilled to row, and put a hecatomb  
On board, and let the fair-cheeked maid embark,  
Chryseis. Send a prince to bear command,—  
Ajax, Idomeneus, or the divine  
Ulysses ;— or thyself, Pelides, thou 190  
Most terrible of men, that with due rites  
Thou soothe the anger of the archer-god."

Achilles the swift-footed, with stern look,  
Thus answered : " Ha, thou mailed in impudence  
And bent on lucre ! Who of all the Greeks 195  
Can willingly obey thee, on the march,  
Or bravely battling with the enemy ?  
I came not to this war because of wrong  
Done to me by the valiant sons of Troy.  
No feud had I with them ; they never took 200  
My beeves or horses, nor, in Phthia's realm,  
Deep-soiled and populous, spoiled my harvest fields.  
For many a shadowy mount between us lies,  
And waters of the wide-resounding sea.  
Man unabashed ! we follow thee that thou 205  
Mayst glory in avenging upon Troy  
The grudge of Menelaus and thy own,  
Thou shameless one ! and yet thou hast for this  
Nor thanks nor care. Thou threatenest now to take  
From me the prize for which I bore long toils 210  
In battle ; and the Greeks decreed it mine.  
I never take an equal share with thee  
Of booty when the Grecian host has sacked  
Some populous Trojan town. My hands perform  
The harder labors of the field in all 215  
The tumult of the fight ; but when the spoil  
Is shared, the largest share of all is thine,  
While I, content with little, seek my ships,  
Weary with combat. I shall now go home  
To Phthia ; better were it to return 220  
With my beaked ships ; but here, where I am held

In little honor, thou wilt fail, I think,  
To gather, in large measure, spoil and wealth."

Him answered Agamemnon, king of men : —

"Desert, then, if thou wilt ; I ask thee not 225

To stay for me ; there will be others left

To do me honor yet, and, best of all,

The all-providing Jove is with me still.

Thee I detest the most of all the men

Ordained by him to govern ; thy delight 230

Is in contention, war, and bloody frays.

If thou art brave, some deity, no doubt,

Hath thus endowed thee. Hence, then, to thy home,

With all thy ships and men ! there domineer

Over thy Myrmidons ; I heed thee not, 235

Nor care I for thy fury. Thus, in turn,

I threaten thee ; since Phœbus takes away

Chryseis, I will send her in my ship

And with my friends, and, coming to thy tent,

Will bear away the fair-cheeked maid, thy prize, 240

Briseis, that thou learn how far I stand

Above thee, and that other chiefs may fear

To measure strength with me, and brave my power."

The rage of Peleus' son, as thus he spake,

Grew fiercer ; in that shaggy breast his heart 245

Took counsel, whether from his thigh to draw

The trenchant sword, and, thrusting back the rest,

Smite down Atrides, or subdue his wrath

And master his own spirit. While he thus

Debated with himself, and half unsheathed 250

The ponderous blade, Pallas Athene came,  
Sent from on high by Juno, the white-armed,  
Who loved both warriors and made both her care.  
She came behind him, seen by him alone,  
And plucked his yellow hair. The hero turned 255  
In wonder, and at once he knew the look  
Of Pallas and the awful-gleaming eye,  
And thus accosted her with winged words :—  
“ Why com’st thou hither, daughter of the god  
Who bears the ægis? Art thou here to see 260  
The insolence of Agamemnon, son  
Of Atreus? Let me tell thee what I deem  
Will be the event. That man may lose his life,  
And quickly too, for arrogance like this.”

Then thus the goddess, blue-eyed Pallas, spake :—  
“ I came from heaven to pacify thy wrath, 265  
If thou wilt heed my counsel. I am sent  
By Juno the white-armed, to whom ye both  
Are dear, who ever watches o’er you both.  
Refrain from violence ; let not thy hand 270  
Unsheathe the sword, but utter with thy tongue  
Reproaches, as occasion may arise,  
For I declare what time shall bring to pass ;  
Threefold amends shall yet be offered thee,  
In gifts of princely cost, for this day’s wrong. 275  
Now calm thy angry spirit, and obey.”

Achilles, the swift-footed, answered thus :—  
“ O goddess, be the word thou bring’st obeyed,  
However fierce my anger ; for to him

Who hearkens to the gods, the gods give ear." 280

So speaking, on the silver hilt he stayed  
His strong right hand, and back into its sheath  
Thrust his good sword, obeying. She, meantime,  
Returned to heaven, where ægis-bearing Jove  
Dwells with the other gods. And now again 285  
Pelides, with opprobrious words, bespoke  
The son of Atreus, venting thus his wrath : —

“ Wine-bibber, with the forehead of a dog  
And a deer’s heart ! Thou never yet hast dared  
To arm thyself for battle with the rest, 290  
Nor join the other chiefs prepared to lie  
In ambush, — such thy craven fear of death.  
Better it suits thee, midst the mighty host  
Of Greeks, to rob some warrior of his prize  
Who dares withstand thee. King thou art, and yet 295  
Devourer of thy people. Thou dost rule  
A spiritless race, else this day’s insolence,  
Atrides, were thy last. And now I say,  
And bind my saying with a mighty oath :  
By this my sceptre, which can never bear 300  
A leaf or twig, since first it left its stem  
Among the mountains, — for the steel has pared  
Its boughs and bark away, to sprout no more, —  
And now the Achaian judges bear it, — they  
Who guard the laws received from Jupiter, — 305  
Such is my oath, — the time shall come when all  
The Greeks shall long to see Achilles back,  
While multitudes are perishing by the hand

Of Hector, the man-queller ; thou, meanwhile,  
Though thou lament, shalt have no power to help, 310  
And thou shalt rage against thyself to think  
That thou hast scorned the bravest of the Greeks."

As thus he spake, Pelides to the ground  
Flung the gold-studded wand, and took his seat.  
Fiercely Atrides raged ; but now uprose 315  
Nestor, the master of persuasive speech,  
The clear-toned Pylian orator, whose tongue  
Dropped words more sweet than honey. He had seen  
Two generations that grew up and lived  
With him on sacred Pylos pass away, 320  
And now he ruled the third. With prudent words  
He thus addressed the assembly of the chiefs :—

"Ye gods ! what new misfortunes threaten Greece !  
How Priam would exult and Priam's sons,  
And how would all the Trojan race rejoice, 325  
Were they to know how furiously ye strive, —  
Ye who in council and in fight surpass  
The other Greeks. Now hearken to my words, —  
Ye who are younger than myself, — for I  
Have lived with braver men than you, and yet 330  
They held me not in light esteem. Such men  
I never saw, nor shall I see again, —  
Men like Pirithoüs and like Druas, lord  
Of nations, Cæneus and Exadius,  
And the great Polypheme, and Theseus, son 335  
Of Ægeus, likest to the immortal gods.  
Strongest of all the earth-born race they fought —

The strongest with the strongest of their time —  
With Centaurs, the wild dwellers of the hills,  
And fearfully destroyed them. With these men 340  
Did I hold converse, coming to their camp  
From Pylos in a distant land. They sent  
To bid me join the war, and by their side  
I fought my best, but no man living now  
On the wide earth would dare to fight with them. 345  
Great as they were, they listened to my words  
And took my counsel. Hearken also ye,  
And let my words persuade you for the best.  
Thou, powerful as thou art, take not from him  
The maiden ; suffer him to keep the prize 350  
Decreed him by the sons of Greece ; and thou,  
Pelides, strive no longer with the king,  
Since never Jove on sceptred prince bestowed  
Like eminence to his. Though braver thou,  
And goddess-born, yet hath he greater power 355  
And wider sway. Atrides, calm thy wrath —  
'T is I who ask — against the chief who stands  
The bulwark of the Greeks in this fierce war."

To him the sovereign Agamemnon said : —  
"The things which thou hast uttered, aged chief, 360  
Are fitly spoken ; but this man would stand  
Above all others ; he aspires to be  
The master, over all to domineer,  
And to direct in all things ; yet, I think,  
There may be one who will not suffer this. 365  
For if by favor of the immortal gods

He was made brave, have they for such a cause  
Given him the liberty of insolent speech?"

Hereat the great Achilles, breaking in,  
Answered: "Yea, well might I deserve the name 370  
Of coward and of wretch, should I submit  
In all things to thy bidding. Such commands  
Lay thou on others, not on me; nor think  
I shall obey thee longer. This I say, —  
And bear it well in mind, — I shall not lift 375  
My hand to keep the maiden whom ye gave  
And now take from me; but whatever else  
May be on board that swift black ship of mine,  
Beware thou carry not away the least  
Without my leave. Come, make the trial now, 380  
That these may see thy black blood bathe my spear."

Then, rising from that strife of words, the twain  
Dissolved the assembly at the Grecian fleet.  
Pelides to his tents and well-manned ships  
Went with Patroclus and his warrior friends, 385  
While Agamemnon bade upon the sea  
Launch a swift bark with twenty chosen men  
To ply the oar, and put a hecatomb  
Upon it for the god. He thither led  
The fair-cheeked maid Chryseis; the command 390  
He gave to wise Ulysses; forth they went,  
Leader and crew, upon their watery path.  
Meanwhile, he bade the camp be purified;  
And straight the warriors purified the camp,  
And, casting the pollutions to the waves, 395

They burned to Phœbus chosen hecatombs  
Of bulls and goats beside the barren main,  
From which the savor rose in smoke to heaven.

So was the host employed. But not the less  
Did Agamemnon persevere to urge 400  
His quarrel with Pelides ; and he thus  
Addressed Talthybius and Eurybates,  
His heralds and his faithful ministers : —

“ Go ye to where Achilles holds his tent,  
And take the fair Briseis by the hand, 405  
And bring her hither. If he yield her not,  
I shall come forth to claim her with a band  
Of warriors, and it shall be worse for him.”

He spake, and sent them forth with added words  
Of menace. With unwilling steps they went 410  
Beside the barren deep, until they reached  
The tents and vessels of the Myrmidons,  
And found Achilles seated by his tent  
And his black ship ; their coming pleased him not.  
They, moved by fear and reverence of the king, 415  
Stopped, and bespoke him not, nor signified  
Their errand ; he perceived their thought and said : —

“ Hail, heralds, messengers of Jove and men !  
Draw near ; I blame you not. I only blame  
Atrides, who hath sent you for the maid. 420  
Noble Patroclus ! bring the damsel forth,  
And let them lead her hence. My witnesses  
Are ye, before the blessed deities,  
And mortal men, and this remorseless king,

If ever he shall need me to avert 425  
The doom of utter ruin from his host.  
Most sure it is, he madly yields himself  
To fatal counsels, thoughtless of the past  
And of the future, nor forecasting how  
The Greeks may fight, unvanquished, by their fleet."

He spake. Meantime Patroclus had obeyed 431  
The word of his beloved friend. He brought  
The fair-cheeked maid Briseis from the tent,  
And she was led away. The messengers  
Returned to where their barks were moored, and she 435  
Unwillingly went with them. Then in tears  
Achilles, from his friends withdrawing, sat  
Beside the hoary ocean-marge, and gazed  
On the black deep beyond, and stretched his hands,  
And prayed to his dear mother, earnestly : — 440

"Mother ! since thou didst bring me forth to dwell  
Brief space on earth, Olympian Jupiter,  
Who thunders in the highest, should have filled  
That space with honors, but he grants them not.  
Wide-ruling Agamemnon takes and holds 445  
The prize I won, and thus dishonors me."

Thus, shedding tears, he spake. His mother heard,  
Sitting within the ocean deeps, beside  
Her aged father. Swiftly from the waves  
Of the gray deep emerging like a cloud, 450  
She sat before him as he wept, and smoothed  
His brow with her soft hand, and kindly said : —

"My child, why weepest thou ? What grief is this ?

Speak, and hide nothing, so that both may know."

Achilles, swift of foot, sighed heavily, 455  
And said : " Thou know'st already. Why relate  
These things to thee, who art apprised of all ?

" To Thebè, to Eëtion's sacred town,  
We marched, and plundered it, and hither brought  
The booty, which was fairly shared among 460  
The sons of Greece, and Agamemnon took  
The fair-cheeked maid Chryseis as his prize.  
But Chryses, priest of Phœbus, to the fleet  
Of the Achaian warriors, brazen-mailed,  
Came, to redeem his daughter, offering 465  
Ransom uncounted. In his hand he bore  
The fillets of Apollo, archer-god,  
Upon the golden sceptre, and he sued  
To all the Greeks, but chiefly to the sons  
Of Atreus, the two leaders of the host. 470  
Then all the other chiefs, applauding, bade  
Revere the priest and take the liberal gifts  
He offered ; but the counsel did not please  
Atrides Agamemnon : he dismissed  
The priest with scorn, and added threatening  
words. 475

The aged man indignantly withdrew ;  
And Phœbus — for the priest was dear to him —  
Granted his prayer and sent among the Greeks  
A deadly shaft. The people of the camp  
Were perishing in heaps. His arrows flew 480  
Among the Grecian army, far and wide.

A seer expert in oracles revealed  
The will of Phœbus, and I was the first  
To counsel that the god should be appeased.  
But Agamemnon rose in sudden wrath, 485  
Uttering a threat, which he has since fulfilled.  
And now the dark-eyed Greeks are taking back  
His child to Chryses, and with her they bear  
Gifts to the monarch-god ; while to my tent  
Heralds have come, and borne away the maid 490  
Briseis, given me by the sons of Greece.  
But succor thou thy son, if thou hast power ;  
Ascend to heaven and bring thy prayer to Jove,  
If e'er by word or act thou gav'st him aid.  
For I remember, in my father's halls 495  
I often heard thee, glorying, tell how thou,  
Alone of all the gods, didst interpose  
To save the cloud-compeller, Saturn's son,  
From shameful overthrow, when all the rest  
Who dwell upon Olympus had conspired 500  
To bind him, — Juno, Neptune, and with them  
Pallas Athene. Thou didst come and loose  
His bonds, and call up to the Olympian heights  
The hundred-handed, whom the immortal gods  
Have named Briareus, but the sons of men 505  
Ægeon, mightier than his sire in strength ;  
And he, rejoicing in the honor, took  
His seat by Jove, and all the immortals shrank  
Aghast before him, and let fall the chains.  
Remind him of all this, and, sitting down, 510

Embrace his knees, and pray him to befriend  
The Trojans, that the Greeks, hemmed in and slain  
Beside their ships and by the shore, may learn  
To glory in their king, and even he,  
Wide-ruling Agamemnon, may perceive 515  
How grievous was his folly when he dared  
To treat with scorn the bravest of the Greeks."

And Thetis answered, weeping as she spake : —  
"Alas, my son, why did I rear thee, born  
To sorrow as thou wert? O would that thou 520  
Unwronged, and with no cause for tears, couldst dwell  
Beside thy ships, since thou must die so soon.  
I brought thee forth in an unhappy hour,  
Short-lived and wronged beyond all other men.  
Yet will I climb the Olympian height among 525  
Its snows and make my suit to Jupiter  
The Thunderer, if haply he may yield  
To my entreaties. Thou, meanwhile, abide  
By thy swift ships, incensed against the Greeks,  
And take no part in all their battles more. 530  
But yesterday did Jove depart to hold  
A banquet far in Ocean's realm, among  
The blameless Ethiopians, and with him  
Went all the train of gods. Twelve days must pass  
Ere he return to heaven, and I will then 535  
Enter his brazen palace, clasp his knees,  
And hope to move his purpose by my prayers."

So saying, she departed, leaving him  
In anger for the shapely damsel's sake,

Whom forcibly they took away. Meantime 540  
Ulysses, with the sacred hecatomb,  
Arrived at Chrysa. Entering the deep port,  
They folded up the sails and laid them down  
In the black ship, and lowering the mast,  
With all its shrouds, they brought it to its place. 545  
Then to the shore they urged the bark with oars,  
And cast the anchors and secured the prow  
With fastenings. Next, they disembarked and stood  
Upon the beach and placed the hecatomb  
In sight of Phœbus, the great archer. Last, 550  
Chryseis left the deck, and, leading her  
Up to the altar, wise Ulysses gave  
The maid to her dear father, speaking thus : —

“ O Chryses ! Agamemnon, king of men,  
Sends me in haste to bring this maid to thee 555  
And offer up this hallowed hecatomb  
To Phœbus, for the Greeks ; that so the god,  
Whose wrath afflicts us sore, may be appeased.

So speaking, to her father's hands he gave  
The maiden ; joyfully the priest received 560  
The child he loved. Then did the Greeks array  
The noble hecatomb in order round  
The sculptured altar, and with washen hands  
They took the salted meal, while Chryses stood  
And spread abroad his hands and prayed aloud : — 565

“ Hear me, thou bearer of the glittering bow,  
Who guardest Chrysa and the pleasant isle  
Of Cilla and art lord in Tenedos !

Already hast thou listened to my prayer  
And honored me, and terribly hast scourged 570  
The Achaian people. Hear me yet again,  
And cause the plague that wastes the Greeks to  
cease."

So spake he, supplicating, and to him  
Phœbus Apollo hearkened. When the prayers  
Were ended, and the salted meal was flung, 575  
Backward they turned the necks of the fat beeves,  
And cut their throats, and flayed the carcasses,  
And hewed away the thighs, and covered them  
With caul in double folds ; and over this  
They laid raw fragments of the other parts. 580  
O'er all the aged priest poured dark red wine,  
And burned them on dry wood. A band of youths  
With five-pronged spits, beside him, thrust these  
through  
The entrails, which they laid among the flames.  
And when the thighs were all consumed, and next 585  
The entrails tasted, all the rest was carved  
Into small portions and transfixed with spits  
And roasted with nice care and then withdrawn  
From the hot coals. This task performed, they made  
The banquet ready. All became its guests 590  
And all were welcome to the equal feast.  
And when their thirst and hunger were allayed,  
Boys crowned the ample urns with wreaths, and served  
The wine to all, and poured libations forth.  
Meantime the Argive youths, that whole day long, 595

Sang to appease the god ; they chanted forth  
High anthems to the archer of the skies.  
He listened to the strain, and his stern mood  
Was softened. When, at length, the sun went down  
And darkness fell, they gave themselves to sleep <sup>600</sup>  
Beside the fastenings of their ships, and when  
Appeared the rosy-fingered Dawn, the child  
Of Morning, they returned to the great host  
Of the Achaians. Phœbus deigned to send  
A favoring breeze ; at once they reared the mast <sup>605</sup>  
And opened the white sails ; the canvas swelled  
Before the wind, and hoarsely round the keel  
The dark waves murmured as the ship flew on.  
So ran she, cutting through the sea her way.  
But when they reached the great Achaian host, <sup>610</sup>  
They drew their vessel high upon the shore  
Among the sands, and underneath its sides  
They laid long beams to prop the keel, and straight  
Dispersed themselves among the tents and ships.

The goddess-born Achilles, swift of foot, <sup>615</sup>  
Beside his ships still brooded o'er his wrath,  
Nor came to council with the illustrious chiefs,  
Nor to the war, but suffered idleness  
To eat his heart away ; for well he loved  
Clamor and combat. But when now, at length, <sup>620</sup>  
The twelfth day came, the ever-living gods  
Returned together to the Olympian mount  
With Jove, their leader. Thetis kept in mind  
Her son's desire, and, with the early morn,

Emerging from the depths of ocean, climbed 625  
To the great heaven and the high mount, and found  
All-seeing Jove, who, from the rest apart,  
Was seated on the loftiest pinnacle  
Of many-peaked Olympus. She sat down  
Before the son of Saturn, clasped his knees 630  
With her left arm, and lifted up her right  
In supplication to the Sovereign One : —

“O Jupiter, my father, if among  
The immortals I have ever given thee aid  
By word or act, deny not my request. 635  
Honor my son, whose life is doomed to end  
So soon ; for Agamemnon, king of men,  
Hath done him shameful wrong : he takes from him  
And keeps the prize he won in war. But thou,  
Olympian Jupiter, supremely wise, 640  
Honor him thou, and give the Trojan host  
The victory, until the humbled Greeks  
Heap large increase of honors on my son.”

She spake, but cloud-compelling Jupiter  
Answered her not ; in silence long he sat. 645  
But Thetis, who had clasped his knees at first,  
Clung to them still, and prayed him yet again : —

“O promise me, and grant my suit ; or else  
Deny it, — for thou need’st not fear, — and I  
Shall know how far below the other gods 650  
Thou holdest me in honor.” As she spake,  
The Cloud-compeller, sighing heavily,  
Answered her thus : “Hard things dost thou require,

And thou wilt force me into new disputes  
 With Juno, who will anger me again 655  
 With contumelious words ; for ever thus,  
 In presence of the immortals, doth she seek  
 Cause of contention, charging that I aid  
 The Trojans in their battles. Now depart,  
 And let her not perceive thee. Leave the rest 660  
 To be by me accomplished ; and that thou  
 Mayst be assured, behold, I give the nod ;  
 For this, with me, the immortals know, portends  
 The highest certainty : no word of mine  
 Which once my nod confirms can be revoked, 665  
 Or prove untrue, or fail to be fulfilled."

As thus he spake, the son of Saturn gave  
 The nod with his dark brows. The ambrosial curls  
 Upon the Sovereign One's immortal head  
 Were shaken, and with them the mighty mount 670  
 Olympus trembled. Then they parted, she  
 Plunging from bright Olympus to the deep,  
 And Jove returning to his palace home ;  
 Where all the gods, uprising from their thrones,  
 At sight of the Great Father, waited not 675  
 For his approach, but met him as he came.

And now upon his throne the Godhead took  
 His seat, but Juno knew — for she had seen —  
 That Thetis of the silver feet, and child  
 Of the gray Ancient of the Deep, had held 680  
 Close council with her consort. Therefore she  
 Bespake the son of Saturn harshly, thus :—

“O crafty one, with whom, among the gods,  
 Plottest thou now? Thus hath it ever been  
 Thy pleasure to devise, apart from me, 685  
 Thy plans in secret ; never willingly  
 Dost thou reveal to me thy purposes.”

Then thus replied the Father of the gods  
 And mortals : “Juno, do not think to know  
 All my designs, for thou wilt find the task 690  
 Too hard for thee, although thou be my spouse.  
 What fitting is to be revealed, no one  
 Of all the immortals or of men shall know  
 Sooner than thou ; but when I form designs  
 Apart from all the gods, presume thou not 695  
 To question me or pry into my plans.”

Juno, the large-eyed and august, rejoined :—  
 “What words, stern son of Saturn, hast thou said !  
 It never was my wont to question thee  
 Or pry into thy plans, and thou art left 700  
 To form them as thou wilt ; yet now I fear  
 The silver-footed Thetis has contrived —  
 That daughter of the Ancient of the Deep —  
 To o’erpersuade thee, for, at early prime,  
 She sat before thee and embraced thy knees ; 705  
 And thou hast promised her, I cannot doubt,  
 To give Achilles honor and to cause  
 Myriads of Greeks to perish by their fleet.”

Then Jove, the cloud-compeller, spake again :—  
 “Harsh-tongued ! thou ever dost suspect me thus,  
 Nor can I act unwatched ; and yet all this 711

Profits thee nothing, for it only serves  
To breed dislike, and is the worse for thee.  
But were it as thou deemest, 't is enough  
That such has been my pleasure. Sit thou down  
In silence, and obey, lest all the gods 716  
Upon Olympus, when I come and lay  
These potent hands on thee, protect thee not."

He spake, and Juno, large-eyed and august,  
O'erawed, and curbing her high spirit, sat 720  
In silence ; meanwhile all the gods of heaven  
Within the halls of Jove were inly grieved.  
But Vulcan, the renowned artificer,  
Sought to console his mother in her grief, —  
The white-armed Juno, — and thus interposed : —

"Great will the evil be and hard to bear, 726  
If, for the sake of mortals, ye are moved  
To such contention and the assembled gods  
Disturbed with discord. Even the pleasant feast  
Will lose its flavor when embittered thus. 730  
And let me warn my mother while I speak,  
Wise as she is, that she defer to Jove,  
Lest the All-Father angrily again  
Reply, and spoil the banquet of the day.  
The Thunderer of Olympus, if he choose 735  
To make a wreck of all things, wields a power  
Far greater than we all. Accost him thou  
With gentle speeches, and the Lord of heaven  
Will then regard us in a kindly mood."

As thus he spake, he gave into the hands 740

Of his beloved mother the round cup  
Of double form, and thus he spake again :—

“Mother, be patient and submit, although  
In sadness, lest these eyes behold thee yet  
Beaten with stripes, and though I hold thee dear <sup>745</sup>  
And grieve for thee, I cannot bring thee help ;  
For hard it is to strive with Jupiter.  
Already once, when I took part with thee,  
He seized me by the foot and flung me o’er  
The battlements of heaven. All day I fell, <sup>750</sup>  
And with the setting sun I struck the earth  
In Lemnos. Little life was left in me,  
What time the Sintians took me from the ground.”

He spake, and Juno, the white-shouldered, smiled,  
And smiling took the cup her son had brought ; <sup>755</sup>  
And next he poured to all the other gods  
Sweet nectar from the jar, beginning first  
With those at the right hand. As they beheld  
Lame Vulcan laboring o’er the palace-floor,  
An inextinguishable laughter broke <sup>760</sup>  
From all the blessed gods. So feasted they  
All day till sunset. From that equal feast  
None stood aloof, nor from the pleasant sound  
Of harp, which Phœbus touched, nor from the voice  
Of Muses singing sweetly in their turn. <sup>765</sup>

But when the sun’s all-glorious light was down,  
Each to his sleeping-place betook himself ;  
For Vulcan, the lame god, with marvellous art,  
Had framed for each the chamber of his rest.

And Jupiter, the Olympian Thunderer, 779  
 Went also to his couch, where 't was his wont,  
 When slumber overtook him, to recline.  
 And there, beside him, slept the white-armed queen  
 Juno, the mistress of the golden throne.

## BOOK II.

**A**LL other deities, all mortal men,  
 Tamers of war-steeds, slept the whole night  
 through ;

But no sweet slumber came to Jove ; his thoughts  
 Were ever busy with the anxious care  
 To crown with honor Peleus' son, and cause  
 Myriads to perish at the Grecian fleet.

At last, this counsel seemed the best, — to send  
 A treacherous dream to Agamemnon, son  
 Of Atreus. Then he called a Dream, and thus  
 Addressing it with winged words, he said : — 10

“ Go, fatal Vision, to the Grecian fleet,  
 And, entering Agamemnon's tent, declare  
 Faithfully what I bid thee. Give command  
 That now he arm, with all the array of war,  
 The long-haired Greeks, for lo, the hour is come 15  
 That gives into his hands the city of Troy  
 With all its spacious streets. The powers who dwell  
 In the celestial mansions are no more

At variance ; Juno's prayers have moved them all,  
And o'er the Trojans hangs a fearful doom." 20

So spake the God ; the Vision heard, and went  
At once to where the Grecian barks were moored,  
And entered Agamemnon's tent and found  
The king reposing, with the balm of sleep  
Poured all around him. At his head the Dream 25  
Took station in the form of Neleus' son,  
Nestor, whom Agamemnon honored most  
Of all the aged men. In such a shape  
The heaven-sent Dream to Agamemnon spake : —

“ O warrior-son of Atreus, sleepest thou ? 30  
Tamer of steeds ! It ill becomes a chief,  
Who has the charge of nations and sustains  
Such mighty cares, to sleep the livelong night.  
Give earnest heed to me, for I am come  
A messenger from Jove, who, though far off, 35  
Takes part in thy concerns and pities thee.  
He bids thee arm, with all the array of war,  
The long-haired Greeks, for now the hour is come  
Which gives into thy hands the city of Troy  
With all its spacious streets. The powers that dwell  
In the celestial mansions are no more 40  
At variance ; Juno's prayers have moved them all,  
And o'er the Trojans hangs a fearful doom,  
Decreed by Jove. Bear what I say in mind,  
And when thy sleep departs forget it not.” 45

He spake, and, disappearing, left the king  
Musing on things that never were to be ;

For on that very day he thought to take  
The city of Priam. Fool ! who little knew  
What Jupiter designed should come to pass, 50  
And little thought by his own act to bring  
Great woe and grief on Greeks and Trojans both  
In hard-fought battles. From his sleep he woke,  
The heavenly voice still sounding in his ears,  
And sat upright, and put his tunic on, 55  
Soft, fair, and new, and over that he cast  
His ample cloak, and round his shapely feet  
Laced the becoming sandals. Next, he hung  
Upon his shoulders and his side the sword  
With silver studs, and took into his hand 60  
The ancestral sceptre, old, but undecayed,  
And with it turned his footsteps toward the fleet  
Of the Achaian warriors brazen-mailed.

Now Dawn, the goddess, climbed the Olympian  
height,  
Foretelling Day to Jupiter and all 65  
The immortal gods, when Agamemnon bade  
The shrill-voiced heralds call the long-haired Greeks  
Together ; they proclaimed his will, and straight  
The warriors came in throngs. But first he bade  
A council of large-minded elders meet 70  
On Pylian Nestor's royal bark, and there  
Laid his well-pondered thought before them thus :—

“ My friends, give ear : a Vision from above  
Came to me sleeping in the balmy night ;  
Most like to noble Nestor was its look, — 75

Its face, its stature, and its garb. It stood  
Beside me at my head, and thus it spake :—

“ ‘ O warrior-son of Atreus, sleepest thou?  
Tamer of steeds! It ill becomes a chief,  
Who has the charge of nations and sustains 80  
Such mighty cares, to sleep the livelong night.  
Give earnest heed to me, for I am come  
A messenger from Jove, who, though far off,  
Takes part in thy concerns and pities thee.  
He bids thee arm, with all the array of war, 85  
The long-haired Greeks, for now the hour is come  
Which gives into thy hands the city of Troy  
With all its spacious streets. The powers who dwell  
In the celestial mansions are no more  
At variance ; Juno’s prayers have moved them all, 90  
And o’er the Trojans hangs a fearful doom,  
Decreed by Jove. Bear what I say in mind.’ ”

“ It spake and passed away, and with it fled  
My slumbers. Now must we devise a way  
To bring into the field the sons of Greece. 95  
I first will try, as best I may, with words,  
And counsel flight from Troy with all our ships.  
Ye each, with different counsels, do your part.”

He spake, and took his seat, and after him  
Nestor, the king of sandy Pylus, rose, 100  
With well-considered words. “ O friends,” he said,  
“ Leaders and princes of the Grecian race,  
Had any other of the Argive host  
Related such a dream, we should have said

The tale is false, and spurned the counsel given. 105  
But he has seen it who in rank and power  
Transcends us all, and ours it is to see  
How we may arm for war the sons of Greece."

He spake, and left the council, and the rest,  
All sceptred kings, arose, prepared to obey 110  
The shepherd of the people. All the Greeks  
Meanwhile came thronging to the appointed place.  
As, swarming forth from cells within the rock,  
Coming and coming still, the tribe of bees  
Fly in a cluster o'er the flowers of spring, 115  
And some are darting out to right and left,  
So from the ships and tents a multitude  
Along the spacious beach, in mighty throngs,  
Moved toward the assembly. Rumor went with them,  
The messenger of Jove, and urged them on. 120  
And now, when they were met, the place was stunned  
With clamor ; earth, as the great crowd sat down,  
Groaned under them ; a din of mingled cries  
Arose ; nine shouting heralds strove to hush  
The noisy crowd to silence, that at length 125  
The heaven-descended monarchs might be heard.

And when the crowd was seated and had paused  
From clamor, Agamemnon rose. He held  
The sceptre ; Vulcan's skill had fashioned it,  
And Vulcan gave it to Saturnian Jove, 130  
And Jove bestowed it on his messenger,  
The Argus-queller Hermes. He in turn  
Gave it to Pelops, great in horsemanship ;

And Pelops passed the gift to Atreus next,  
 The people's shepherd. Atreus, when he died, 135  
 Bequeathed it to Thyestes, rich in flocks ;  
 And last, Thyestes left it to be borne  
 By Agamemnon, symbol of his rule  
 O'er many isles and all the Argive realm.  
 Leaning on this, he spake these winged words :—

“ Friends, Grecian heroes, ministers of Mars, 141  
 Saturnian Jove hath in an evil net  
 Entangled me most cruelly. He gave  
 His promise and his nod, that, having razed  
 Troy with her strong defences, I should see 145  
 My home again ; but now he meditates  
 To wrong me, and commands me to return,  
 With lessened glory and much people lost,  
 To Argos. Thus hath it seemed good to Jove  
 The mighty, who hath overthrown the towers 150  
 Of many a city, and will yet o'erthrow.  
 The ages yet to come will hear with shame  
 That such a mighty army of the Greeks  
 Have waged a fruitless war, and fought in vain  
 A foe less numerous ; yet no end appears 155  
 To this long strife. Should Greeks and Trojans make  
 A treaty, faithfully to number each,  
 And should the Trojans count their citizens,  
 And we the Greeks, disposed in rows of tens,  
 Should call the Trojans singly to pour out 160  
 The wine for us, full many a company  
 Of ten would lack its cup-bearer ; so far,

I judge, the sons of Greece outnumber those  
Who dwell in Troy. But they have yet allies  
From many a city, men who wield the spear, 165  
Withstanding my attempt to overthrow  
That populous town. Nine years of mighty Jove  
Have passed already, and the planks that form  
Our barks are mouldering, and the cables drop  
In pieces, and our wives within their homes, 170  
With their young children, sit expecting us ;  
Yet is the enterprise for which we came  
Still unperformed. Now let us all obey  
The mandate I reveal, and hasten hence,  
With all our fleet, to our beloved homes ; 175  
For Troy with her broad streets we cannot take."

He spake, and in the bosoms of the crowd  
Stirred every heart ; even those who heard him not  
Were moved : the assembly wavered to and fro  
Like the long billows of the Icarian Sea, 180  
Roused by the East wind and the South, that rush  
Forth from the cloudy scat of Father Jove ;  
Or like the harvest-field, when west winds stoop  
Suddenly from above, and toss the wheat.  
So was the whole assembly swayed ; they ran 185  
With tumult to the ships ; beneath their feet  
Rose clouds of dust, and each exhorted each  
To seize the ships and drag them to the deep.  
They cleared the channels mid the clamorous cries  
Of multitudes, who hastened to return, 190  
And drew the props from underneath their barks.

Then had the Greeks returned before their time  
If Juno had not to Minerva said : —

“Unconquerable child of Jove! What change  
Is this? Shall then the Argive army thus 195  
Flee to their homes across the deep and leave  
Glory to Priam, and to Ilium's sons  
The Argive Helen, for whose sake have died  
So many Greeks upon the Trojan strand,  
Far from the land they loved? But hasten thou 200  
To the host of Argive warriors mailed in brass,  
And with persuasive words restrain their men.  
Nor let them launch their barks upon the sea.”

She spake ; nor did the blue-eyed Pallas fail  
To heed the mandate, but with quick descent 205  
She left the Olympian height and suddenly  
Stood by the swift ships of the Grecian host.  
She found Ulysses there, the man endowed  
With wisdom like to Jove's ; he had not touched  
His well-appointed bark, for grief had seized 210  
The hero's heart. The blue-eyed goddess took  
Her place beside him, and addressed him thus : —

“Son of Laertes, nobly born and sage  
Ulysses, will ye, entering your good ships,  
Return in flight to your own land and leave 215  
Glory to Priam, and to Ilium's sons  
The Argive Helen, for whose sake have died  
So many Greeks upon the Trojan strand,  
Far from the land they loved? Go thou at once  
And seek the Argive warriors and restrain 220

With thy persuasive words the impatient men,  
Nor let them launch their well-appointed ships."

She spake ; Ulysses knew the heavenly voice,  
And hastened back, and as he ran cast by  
His cloak. Eurybates of Ithaca, 225  
The herald, caught it as he followed him.  
And now before Atrides, king of men,  
The warrior stood, and from his hand received  
The ancestral sceptre, old, but undecayed ;  
And bearing this, he went among the ships 230  
Which brought the Achaian army, mailed in brass ;  
And whomso'er he met upon his way,  
Monarch or eminent among the host,  
He stopped him, and addressed him blandly, thus : —

" Good friend, this eager haste as if from fear 235  
Befits thee not. Sit down, and cause the rest  
To sit. What Agamemnon's will may be  
Thou canst not yet be certain ; he intends  
To try the Greeks, and soon will punish those  
Who act amiss. We cannot all have heard 240  
What he has said ; beware, then, lest his wrath  
Fall heavily upon the sons of Greece.  
The monarch, foster-child of Jupiter,  
Is terrible enraged. Authority  
Is given by Jove, all-wise, who loves the king." 245

But when he found one of the lower sort  
Shouting and brawling, with the royal wand  
He smote him, and reproved him sharply, thus : —

" Friend, take thy seat in quiet, and attend

To what thy betters say ; thou art not strong 250  
 Nor valiant, and thou art of mean repute  
 In combat and in council. We, the Greeks,  
 Cannot be all supreme in power. The rule  
 Of the many is not well. One must be chief  
 In war, and one the king, to whom the son 255  
 Of Saturn gives the sceptre, making him  
 The lawgiver, that he may rule the rest."

Thus did he act the chief, and make the host  
 Obey his word ; they to the council ground  
 Came rushing back from all the ships and tents 260  
 With tumult, as, on the long-stretching shore  
 Of ocean many-voiced, his billows fling  
 Themselves in fury, and the deep resounds.

All others took their seats and kept their place ;  
 Thersites only, clamorous of tongue, 265  
 Kept brawling. He, with many insolent words,  
 Was wont to seek unseemly strife with kings,  
 Uttering whate'er it seemed to him might move  
 The Greeks to laughter. Of the multitude  
 Who came to Ilium, none so base as he, — 270  
 Squint-eyed, with one lame foot, and on his back  
 A lump, and shoulders curving towards the chest ;  
 His head was sharp, and over it the hairs  
 Were thinly scattered. Hateful to the chiefs  
 Achilles and Ulysses, he would oft 275  
 Revile them. He to Agamemnon now  
 Called with shrill voice and taunting words. The  
 Greeks

Heard him impatiently, with strong disgust  
And vehement anger, yet he shouted still  
To Agamemnon, and kept railing on : — 280

“Of what dost thou complain ; what wouldst thou  
more,

Atrides? In thy tents are heaps of gold ;  
Thy tents are full of chosen damsels, given  
To thee before all others, by the Greeks,  
Whene'er we take a city. Dost thou yet 285  
Hanker for gold, brought by some Trojan knight,  
A ransom for his son, whom I shall lead —  
I, or some other Greek — a captive bound ?  
Or dost thou wish, for thy more idle hours,  
Some maiden, whom thou mayst detain apart ? 290  
Ill it beseems a prince like thee to lead  
The sons of Greece, for such a cause as this,  
Into new perils. O ye coward race !  
Ye abject Greeklings, Greeks no longer, haste  
Homeward with all the fleet, and let us leave 295  
This man at Troy to win his trophies here,  
That he may learn whether the aid we give  
Avails him aught or not, since he insults  
Achilles, a far braver man than he,  
And takes from him by force and holds his prize.  
And yet, Achilles is not moved by this 301  
To anger : he is spiritless, or else,  
Atrides, this injustice were thy last.”

Taunting the shepherd of the people thus,  
Thersites shouted to the king of men. 305

But great Ulysses, coming quickly up,  
 Rebuked him with a frown: "Thou garrulous wretch!  
 Glib as thou art of tongue, Thersites, cease,  
 Nor singly dare to seek dispute with kings.  
 There came, I deem, no viler wretch than thou 310  
 To Troy with Agamemnon. Prate no more  
 Of kings, reviling them, and keeping watch  
 For pretexts to return. We know not yet  
 Whether to go or to remain were best.  
 Thou railest at the shepherd of the host, 315  
 Atrides Agamemnon, for thou seest  
 The Grecian heroes load him with rewards,  
 While thou insultest him with scurrilous words.  
 I tell thee now, — and I shall keep my word, —  
 If e'er again I find thee railing on, 320  
 As now thou dost, then let Ulysses wear  
 His head no longer, let me not be called  
 The father of Telemachus, if I  
 Shall fail to seize thee, and to strip thee bare  
 Of cloak and tunic, and whatever else 325  
 Covers thy carcass, and to send thee forth,  
 Howling, to our swift barks upon the shore,  
 Scourged from the council with a storm of blows."<sup>9</sup>

He spake, and with his sceptre smote the back  
 And shoulders of the scoffer, who crouched low 330  
 And shed a shower of tears. A bloody whelk  
 Rose where the golden sceptre fell. He took  
 His seat, dismayed, and still in pain wiped off  
 The tears from his smutched face. The multitude

Around him, though in anxious mood, were moved  
To smiles, and one addressed his neighbor thus :—

“ Strange that Ulysses does a thousand things 337  
So well, — so wise in council, and in war  
So brave ; and for the Grecian army now  
He does the best of all, in silencing 340  
The chatter of this saucy slanderer,  
Whose acrid temper will not soon again  
Move him to rail with insolent speech at kings.”

So talked the multitude. . Ulysses then,  
Holding the sceptre, rose, and by his side 345  
The blue-eyed Pallas, in a herald's form,  
Commanded silence, that the Argive host —  
The mightiest and the meanest — might attend  
To what should now be said, and calmly weigh  
The counsel given them. With a prudent art 350  
Ulysses framed his speech, and thus he spake :—

“ The Greeks, O Atreus' son, would bring on thee  
Dishonor in the eyes and speech of men,  
Breaking the promise made when first they came  
From Argos, famed for steeds, that, having spoiled  
This well-defended Troy, thou shouldst return 356  
A conqueror. And now, like tender boys  
Or widowed women, all give way to grief  
And languish to return. 'T were hard to bear  
If, after all our sufferings and our toils, 360  
We go back now. And yet, whoe'er remains  
A single month away from wife and home  
Chafes if the winter storms and angry sea

Detain him still on board his well-oared bark ;  
And we have seen the ninth full year roll round 365  
Since we came hither. Therefore blame I not  
The Greeks if they in their beaked ships repine  
At this delay. But then it were disgrace  
To linger here so long and journey home  
With empty hands. Bear with us yet, and wait 370  
Till it be certain whether Calchas speaks  
Truly or not. For we remember well,  
And all of you whom cruel death has spared  
Are witnesses with me, that when the ships  
Of Greece — it seems as if but yesterday — 375  
Mustered in Aulis on their way to bring  
Woe upon Priam and the town of Troy,  
And we, beside a fountain, offered up  
On sacred altars chosen hecatombs,  
Under a shapely plane-tree, from whose root 380  
Flowed the clear water, there appeared to us  
A wondrous sign. A frightful serpent, marked  
With crimson spots, which Jupiter sent forth  
To daylight from beneath the altar-stone,  
Came swiftly gliding toward the tree, whereon 385  
A sparrow had her young — eight unfledged birds —  
Upon the topmost bough and screened by leaves ;  
The mother was the ninth. The serpent seized  
The helpless brood and midst their piteous cries  
Devoured them, while the mother fluttered round,  
Lamenting, till he caught her by the wing ; 391  
And when he had destroyed the parent bird

And all her brood, the god who sent him forth  
 Made him a greater marvel still. The son  
 Of crafty Saturn changed the snake to stone ; 393  
 And we who stood around were sore amazed.  
 Such was the awful portent which the gods  
 Showed at that sacrifice. But Calchas thus  
 Instantly spake, interpreting the sign :—

“ ‘ O long-haired Greeks,’ he said, ‘ why stand ye  
 thus 400

In silence? All-foreseeing Jupiter  
 Hath sent this mighty omen ; late it comes  
 And late will be fulfilled, yet gloriously,  
 And with a fame that never shall decay.  
 For as the snake devoured the sparrow’s brood, 405  
 Eight nestlings, and the mother-bird the ninth, —  
 So many years the war shall last ; the tenth  
 Shall give into our hands the stately Troy.’

“ So spake the seer ; thus far his words are true.  
 Bide ye then here, ye well-greaved sons of Greece,  
 Until the city of Priam shall be ours.” 411

He spake, and loud applause thereon ensued  
 From all the Greeks, and fearfully the ships  
 Rang with the clamorous voices uttering  
 The praises of Ulysses and his words. 415  
 Then Nestor, the Gerenian knight, arose  
 And thus addressed them : “ Strangely ye behave,  
 Like boys unwonted to the tasks of war.  
 Where now are all your promises and oaths?  
 Shall all our councillings and all our cares, 420

Leagues made with wine, religiously outpoured,  
And plightings of the strong right hand, be cast  
Into the flames? Idly we keep alive  
A strife of words, which serves no end though long  
We loiter here! But thou, Atrides, firm 425  
Of purpose, give command that now the Greeks  
Move to the war, and leave to meet their fate  
Those — one or more — who, parting from our host,  
Meditate — but I deem in vain — to flee  
Homeward to Argos ere they are assured 430  
Whether the word of Jove omnipotent  
Be false or true. For when the Greeks embarked  
In their swift ships, to carry death and fate  
To Ilium's sons, almighty Jupiter  
Flung down his lightnings on the right and gave 435  
Propitious omens. Therefore let no Greek  
Go home till he possess a Trojan wife  
And ye have signally avenged the wrongs  
And griefs of Helen. Yet, if one be here  
Who longs to go, let him but lay his hand 440  
On his black ship, prepared to cross the deep,  
And he shall die before the rest. But thou,  
O king, be wisely counselled, lend an ear  
To others, nor neglect what I propose.  
Marshal the Greeks by tribes and brotherhoods, 445  
That tribe may stand by tribe, and brotherhoods  
Succor each other; if thou thus command  
And they obey, thou shalt discern which chief  
Or soldier is faint-hearted, which is brave,

For each will fight his best, and thou shalt know 450  
Whether through favor of the gods to Troy,  
Or our own cowardice and shameful lack  
Of skill in war, the town is not o'erthrown."

In turn the monarch Agamemnon spake : —  
" O aged warrior, thou excellest all 455  
The Greeks in council. Would to Jupiter,  
To Pallas and Apollo, that with me  
There were but ten such comrades. Priam's town  
Would quickly fall before us and be made  
A desolation. But the god who bears 460  
The ægis, Saturn's son, hath cast on me  
Much grief, entangling me in idle strifes  
And angry broils. Achilles and myself  
Have quarrelled for a maid with bitter words,  
And I was first incensed. But if again 465  
We meet and act as friends, the overthrow  
That threatens Ilium will not be delayed, —  
Not for an hour. Now all to your repast !  
And then prepare for battle. First let each  
See that his spear be sharp, and put his shield 470  
In order, give to his swift-footed steeds  
Their ample forage, and o'erlook his car  
That it be strong for war ; for all the day  
Shall we maintain the stubborn fight, nor cease  
Even for a moment, till the night come down 475  
To part the wrathful combatants. The band  
Of each broad buckler shall be moist with sweat  
On every breast, and weary every arm

That wields the spear, and every horse that drags  
 The polished chariot o'er the field shall smoke 480  
 With sweat. But whosoever shall be found  
 By the beaked ships and skulking from the fray  
 Shall be the feast of birds of prey and dogs !”

He spake ; the Argives raised a mighty shout,  
 Loud as when billows lash the beetling shore, 485  
 Rolled by the south-wind toward some jutting rock  
 On which the waves, whatever wind may blow,  
 Beat ceaselessly. In haste the people rose  
 And went among the ships, and kindled fires  
 Within their tents and took their meal. And one  
 Made offerings to one god ; another paid 491  
 Vows to another of the immortal race ;  
 And all implored deliverance from death  
 And danger. Agamemnon, king of men,  
 Offered a fatted ox of five years old 495  
 To Jupiter Almighty, summoning  
 The elder princes of the Grecian host, —  
 Nestor the first, the king Idomeneus,  
 And then the warriors Ajax and the son  
 Of Tydeus, with Ulysses, like to Jove 500  
 In council, sixth and last. Unbidden came  
 The valiant Menelaus, for he knew  
 The cares that weighed upon his brother's heart.  
 Then, as they stood around the fatted ox  
 And took in hand the salted barley-meal, 505  
 King Agamemnon in the circle prayed : —

“O Jove, most great and glorious ! who dost rule

The tempest, — dweller of the ethereal space !  
Let not the sun go down and night come on  
Ere I shall lay the halls of Priam waste 510  
With fire, and give their portals to the flames,  
And hew away the coat of mail that shields  
The breast of Hector, splitting it with steel.  
And may his fellow-warriors, many a one,  
Fall round him to the earth and bite the dust.” 515

He spake ; the son of Saturn hearkened not,  
But took the sacrifice and made more hard  
The toils of war. And now when they had prayed,  
And strown the salted meal, they drew the neck  
Of the victim back and cut the throat and flayed 520  
The carcass, hewed away the thighs and laid  
The fat upon them in a double fold,  
On which they placed raw strips of flesh, and these  
They burned with leafless billets. Then they fixed  
The entrails on the spits and held them forth 525  
Above the flames, and when the thighs were burned  
And entrails tasted, all the rest was carved  
Into small portions and transfixed with spits  
And roasted carefully and drawn away.  
And when these tasks were finished and the board  
Was spread, they feasted ; from that equal feast 531  
None went unsated. When they had appeased  
Their thirst and hunger, the Gerenian knight  
Nestor stood forth and spake : “ Most glorious son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon, king of men ! 535  
Waste we no time in prattle, nor delay

· The work appointed by the gods, but send  
The heralds of the Achaians, brazen-mailed,  
To call the people to the fleet, while we  
Pass in a body through their vast array 540  
And wake the martial spirit in their breasts.”

He spake, and Agamemnon, king of men,  
Followed the counsel. Instantly he bade  
The loud-voiced herald summon to the war  
The long-haired Argives. At the call they came, 545  
Quickly they came together, and the kings,  
Nurslings of Jupiter, who stood beside  
Atrides, hastened through the crowd to form  
The army into ranks. Among them walked  
The blue-eyed Pallas, bearing on her arm 550  
The priceless ægis, ever fair and new,  
And undecaying ; from its edge there hung  
A hundred golden fringes, fairly wrought,  
And every fringe might buy a hecatomb.  
With this and fierce, defiant looks she passed 555  
Through all the Achaian host, and made their hearts  
Impatient for the march and strong to endure  
The combat without pause, — for now the war  
Seemed to them dearer than the wished return,  
In their good galleys, to the land they loved. 560

As when a forest on the mountain-top  
Is in a blaze with the devouring flame  
And shines afar, so, while the warriors marched,  
The brightness of their burnished weapons flashed  
On every side and upward to the sky. 565

And as when water-fowl of many tribes —  
Geese, cranes, and long-necked swans — disport  
themselves

In Asia's fields beside Cayster's streams,  
And to and fro they fly with screams, and light,  
Flock after flock, and all the fields resound ; 570  
So poured, from ships and tents, the swarming tribes  
Into Scamander's plain, where fearfully  
Earth echoed to the tramp of steeds and men ;  
And there they mustered on the river's side,  
Numberless as the flowers and leaves of spring. 575  
And as when flies in swarming myriads haunt  
The herdsman's stalls in spring-time, when new milk  
Has filled the pails, — in such vast multitudes  
Mustered the long-haired Greeks upon the plain,  
Impatient to destroy the Trojan race. 580

Then, as the goatherds, when their mingled flocks  
Are in the pastures, know and set apart  
Each his own scattered charge, so did the chiefs,  
Moving among them, marshal each his men.  
There walked King Agamemnon, like to Jove 585  
In eye and forehead, with the loins of Mars,  
And ample chest like him who rules the sea.  
And as a bull amid the hornèd herd  
Stands eminent and nobler than the rest,  
So Jove to Agamemnon on that day 590  
Gave to surpass the chiefs in port and mien.

O Muses, goddesses who dwell on high,  
Tell me, — for all things ye behold and know,

While we know nothing and may only hear  
 The random tales of rumor, — tell me who 595  
 Were chiefs and princes of the Greeks ; for I  
 Should fail to number and to name them all, —  
 Had I ten tongues, ten throats, a voice unapt  
 To weary, uttered from a heart of brass, —  
 Unless the Muses aided me. I now 600  
 Will sing of the commanders and the ships.

Peneleus, Prothoënor, Leïtus,  
 And Clonius, and Arcesilaus led  
 The warriors of Bœotia, all who dwelt  
 In Hyria and in rocky Aulis, all 605  
 From Schœnus and from Scolus and the hill  
 Of Eteonus and Thespeia's fields,  
 And Graia and the Mycalesian plain,  
 All who from Herma and Ilesius came,  
 And Erythræ, and those who had their homes 610  
 In Eleon, Hyla, and Ocalea,  
 And Peteona, and the stately streets  
 Of Medeon, Copæ, Thisbè full of doves,  
 And those whose dwelling-place was Eutresis,  
 And Coronæa, and the grassy lawns 615  
 Of Haliartus, all the men who held  
 Plataæ, or in Glissa tilled the soil,  
 Or dwelt in Hypothebæ nobly built,  
 Or in Onchestus with its temple-walls  
 Sacred to Neptune, or inhabited 620  
 Arnè with fruitful vineyards, Midea  
 And Nyssa the divine, and Anthedon

The distant, — fifty were their barks, and each  
Held sixscore youths of the Bœotian race.

Next, over those who came from Aspledon 625  
And from Orchomenus in Minyas  
Ascalaphus ruled with his brother chief  
Ialmenus, — two sons of mighty Mars.  
These, in the halls of Actor, Azis' son,  
Astyoche bore to the god of war, 630  
Who met by stealth the bashful maid, as once  
She sought the upper palace-rooms. Their ships  
Were thirty, ranged in order on the shore.

Then Schedius and Epistrophus, two chiefs  
Born to Iphitus, son of Naubolus 635  
The large of soul, led the Phocæan host,  
Those who in Cyparissus had their homes,  
In Panope and Crissa the divine  
And Daulis, or about Hyampolis  
Anemoreia, and upon the banks 640  
Of broad Cephissus, and with them the race  
Who held Lilæa by Cephissus' springs.  
With these came forty ships. Their leaders went  
Among them, ranging them in due array  
And close to the Bœotians on the left. 645

Ajax the swift of foot, Oileus' son,  
Was leader of the Locrians, — less in limb  
And stature than the other Ajax, — nay,  
Much smaller than that son of Telamon,  
Wearing a linen corselet ; but to wield 650  
The spear he far excelled all other men

Of Hellas and Achaia. Those who dwelt  
 In Cynus, Opus, Bessa, and the fields  
 Of Scarpha and Calliarus and green  
 Augeia, Tarpha, and the meadows where 655  
 Boagrius waters Thronium, followed him  
 With forty dark-hulled Locrian barks, that came  
 From coasts beyond Eubœa's sacred isle.

The Eubœans breathing valor, they who held  
 Chalcis, Eretria, and the vineyard slopes 660  
 Of Histiaëa, and the lofty walls  
 Of Dium and Cerinthus by the sea,  
 And Styra, and Earystus ; these obeyed  
 Elphenor of the line of Mars, and son  
 Of the large-souled Chalcodon ruler o'er 665  
 The Abantes. Him with loosely-flowing locks  
 The Abantes followed, swift of foot and fierce  
 In combat, and expert to break the mail  
 Upon the enemies' breasts with ashen spears ;  
 With forty dark-hulled barks they followed him. 670

Next they who came from Athens nobly built,  
 The city of Erechtheus, great of soul,  
 Son of the teeming Earth, whom Pallas reared,  
 That daughter of the Highest, and within  
 Her sumptuous temple placed him, where the sons  
 Of Athens, with the circling year's return, 676  
 Paid worship at her altars, bringing bulls  
 And lambs to lay upon them ; these obeyed  
 Menestheus, son of Peteus, whom no chief  
 On earth could equal in the art to place 680

Squadrons of men and horse in due array  
 For battle. Nestor only sought to share  
 This praise, but Nestor was the elder chief.  
 Fifty dark galleys with Menestheus came.

Ajax had brought twelve ships from Salamis, 685  
 And these he stationed near the Athenian host.

But they who dwelt in Argos, or within  
 The strong-walled Tiryns, or Hermione  
 And Asine with their deep, sheltering bays,  
 Trœzene and Eïonæ, and hills 690 -  
 Of Epidaurus planted o'er with vines,  
 And they who tilled Ægina and the coast  
 Of Mases, — Grecian warriors, — over these  
 Brave Diomed bore sway, with Sthenelus,  
 Beloved son of far-famed Campaneus, 695  
 And, third in rule, Euryalus, who seemed  
 Like to a god, Mecisteus' royal son  
 Who sprung from Talaus ; yet the chief command  
 Was given to Diomed, the great in war.  
 A fleet of eighty galleys came with them. 700

The dwellers of Mycenæ nobly built,  
 Of Corinth famed for riches, and the town  
 Of beautiful Cleonæ, they who tilled  
 Orneia, Aræthyrea's pleasant land,  
 And Sicyon, where of yore Adrastus reigned, 705  
 And Hyperesia and the airy heights  
 Of Gonoessa, and Pellenè's fields,  
 And they who came from Ægium and the shores  
 Around it, and broad lands of Helicè, —

These had a hundred barks, and over them 710  
Atrides Agamemnon bore command ;  
And with him came the largest train of troops  
And bravest. He was cased in gleaming mail,  
And his heart gloried when he thought how high  
He stood among the heroes, — mightier far 715  
In power, and leader of a mightier host.

Then they who dwelt within the hollow vale  
Of queenly Lacedæmon, they who held  
Phare and Sparta, Messa full of doves,  
Bryseia, and Augeia's rich domain, 720  
Amyclæ and the town of Helos, built  
Close to the sea, and those who had their homes  
In Laäs and the fields of Cætylus ;  
All these obeyed the brother of the king,  
The valiant Menelaus. Sixty ships 725  
They brought, but these he ranged apart from those  
Of Agamemnon. Through the ranks he went,  
And, trusting in his valor, quickened theirs  
For battle ; for his heart within him burned  
To avenge the wrongs of Helen and her tears. 730

Then came the men who tilled the Pylean coast  
And sweet Arenè, Thrya at the fords  
Of Alpheus, and the stately palace homes  
Of Æpy, or in Cyparissus dwelt,  
Or in Amphigeneia, Pteleum, 735  
Helos and Dorium, where the Muses once  
Met, journeying from Cæcalian Eurytus,  
The Thracian Thamyras, and took from him

His power of voice. For he had made his boast  
To overcome in song the daughters nine 740  
Of Jove the Ægis-bearer. They in wrath  
Smote him with blindness, took the heavenly gift  
Of song away, and made his hand forget  
Its cunning with the harp. All those were led  
By Nestor, the Gerenian knight, who came 745  
To war on Troy with fourscore ships and ten.

The Arcadians, dwelling by the lofty mount  
Cyllene, near the tomb of Epytus,  
Warriors who combat hand to hand, and they  
Who tilled the fields of Pheneus and possessed 750  
Orchomenus with all its flocks, or dwelt  
In Ripa and in Stratia, and the bleak  
Enispe, beaten with perpetual winds,  
And in Tegea, and the lovely land  
Of Mantinea, and in Stympalus 755  
And in Parrhasia, came in sixty ships  
To Troy, with Agapenor for their chief,  
Son of Ancæus. Every ship was thronged  
With warriors of Arcadia, for the king  
Of men, Atrides, gave them well-oared barks 760  
To cross the dark blue deep, since not to them  
Pertained the cares and labors of the sea.

Then from Buprasium and the sacred coast  
Of Elis, from Hyrmine and remote  
Myrsinus and the Olenian precipice, 765  
And from Alisium came, with chieftains four,  
The warriors, ten swift galleys following

Each chieftain, crowded with Epean troops.  
And part obeyed Amphimachus, the son  
Of Cteatus, and part with Thalpius came, 770  
The son of Eurytus Actorides,  
And part with brave Diores, of the line  
Of Amarynceus. Last, Polyxenus,  
The godlike offspring of Agasthenes,  
Whose father was Augeias, led the rest. 775

They from Dulichium and the Echinades,  
Those holy isles descried from Elis o'er  
The waters, had for leader Megas, brave  
As Mars, — the son of Phyleus, dearly loved  
By Jove. He left his father's house in wrath 780  
And dwelt within Dulichium. With the troops  
Of Megas came a fleet of forty ships.

Ulysses led the Cephallenian men,  
Who dwelt in Ithaca, or whose abode  
Was leafy Neritus, and those who came 785  
From Crocyleia, and from Ægilips  
The craggy, and Zacynthus, and the isle  
Of Samos, and Epirus, and from all  
The bordering lands. O'er these Ulysses ruled,  
A chief like Jove in council, and with him 790  
There came twelve galleys with their scarlet prows.

Then with the Ætolians came Andræmon's son  
Thoas, their leader. With him were the men  
Of Pleuron and Pylene, Olenus,  
And Chalcis on the sea-coast and the rocks 795  
Of Calydon ; for now no more the sons

Of large-souled CENEUS were alive on earth,  
Nor lived the chief himself, and in his tomb  
Was MELEAGER of the golden hair ;  
And thus the Ætolian rule to THOAS came. 800  
A fleet of fourscore galleys followed him.

Idomeneus, expert to wield the spear,  
Commanded those of CRETE, the men who dwelt  
In CNOSUS or GORTYNA, strongly walled  
LYCTUS, MILETUS, and the glimmering 805  
LYCASTUS, PHÆSTUS, RHYTIUM'S populous town,  
And all the warrior train inhabiting  
The hundred towns of CRETE. Idomeneus  
The mighty spearman, and MERIONES,  
Fierce as the god of war, commanded these, 810  
And came to TROY with eighty dark-ribbed barks.

Tlepolemus, a warrior of the stock  
Of HERCULES, was leader of the troops  
Of RHODES, and brought nine vessels to the war,  
Manned with the haughty RHODIANS. These were  
ranged 815

In threefold order : those of LINDUS, those  
Who dwell in white CAMIRUS, lastly those  
Of IALASSA. These Tlepolemus,  
The valiant spearman, ruled. ASTYOCHÉ  
Bore him to mighty HERCULES, who led 820  
The maid from EPHYRA, upon the banks  
Of SELLEIS, to be his wife, what time  
His valor had o'erthrown and made a spoil  
Of many a city full of noble youths.

Tlepolemus, when in the palace-halls 825  
 He grew to manhood, slew an aged man,  
 An uncle of his father, whom he loved,  
 Lycimnius, of the line of Mars, and straight  
 He rigged a fleet of ships and led on board  
 A numerous host and fled across the sea. 830  
 For fearful were the threats of other sons  
 And grandsons of the mighty Hercules.  
 In Rhodes they landed after wanderings long  
 And many hardships. There they dwelt in tribes,—  
 Three tribes, — and were beloved of Jupiter, 835  
 The ruler over gods and men, who poured  
 Abundant riches on their new abode.

Nireus with three good ships from Syma came, —  
 Nireus, Aglaia's son by Charopus  
 The monarch, — Nireus who in comeliness 840  
 Surpassed all Greeks that came to Ilium, save  
 The faultless son of Peleus. Yet was he  
 Unwarlike and few people followed him.

The dwellers of Nisyros, Crapathus,  
 And Cos, the city of Eurypylus, 845  
 Casus, and the Calydnian isles, obeyed  
 Phidippus and his brother Antiphus,  
 Sons of the monarch Thessalus, who sprang  
 From Hercules. With thirty ships they came.

But those who held Pelasgian Argos, those 850  
 Who dwelt in Alos, Trachys, Alope,  
 Phthia, and Hellas full of lovely dames, —  
 Named Myrmidons, Achaians, Hellenes, —

Achilles led their fifty ships ; but they  
Now heeded not the summons to the war, 855  
For there was none to form their ranks for fight.  
The great Achilles, swift of foot, remained  
Within his ships, indignant for the sake  
Of the fair-haired Briseis, whom he brought  
A captive from Lyrnessus after toils  
And dangers many. He had sacked and spoiled  
Lyrnessus, and o'erthrown the walls of Thebes  
And smitten Mynes and Epistrophus,  
The warlike sons of King Evenus, sprung  
From old Selapius. For this cause he kept 865  
Within his ships, full soon to issue forth.

The men of Phylace, of Pyrasus, —  
Sacred to Ceres and o'erspread with flowers,  
And of Itona, mother of white flocks,  
Antrona on the sea, and Pteleum green 870  
With herbage, — over these while yet he lived  
The brave Protesilaus ruled ; but now  
The dark earth covered him, and for his sake  
His consort, desolate in Phylace,  
Tore her fair cheeks, and all unfinished stood 875  
His palace, for a Dardan warrior slew  
Her husband as he leaped upon the land,  
The foremost of the Achaians. Yet his troops  
Were not without a leader, though they mourned  
Their brave old chief. Podarces, loved by Mars, —  
Son of Iphiclus, rich in flocks, who sprang 881  
From Phylacus, — led them and formed their ranks.

A younger brother of the slain was he.  
 The slain was braver. Though the warriors grieved  
 To lose their glorious chief, they did not lack 885  
 A general. Forty dark ships followed him.

Then they who dwelt in Pheræ, by the lake  
 Bæbeis, and in Bæbe, Glaphyræ,  
 And nobly built Iolchos, came to Troy,  
 Filling eleven galleys, and obeyed 890  
 Eumelus, whom Alcestis the divine  
 Bore to Admetus, — fairest, she, of all  
 The house of Pelias and of womankind.

Those from Methonè and Olizon's rocks,  
 And Melibœa and Thaumacia, filled 895  
 Seven ships, with Philoctetes for their chief,  
 A warrior skilled to bend the bow. Each bark  
 Held fifty rowers, bowmen all, and armed  
 For stubborn battle. But their leader lay  
 Far in an island, suffering grievous pangs, — 900  
 The hallowed isle of Lemnos. There the Greeks  
 Left him, in torture from a venomed wound  
 Made by a serpent's fangs. He lay and pined.  
 Yet was the moment near when they who thus  
 Forsook their king should think of him again. 905  
 Meantime his troops were not without a chief;  
 Though greatly they desired their ancient lord,  
 For now the base-born Medon marshalled them,  
 Son of Oileus. Rhene brought him forth  
 To that destroyer of strong fortresses. 910

The men of Tricca and Ithome's hills,

And they who held Œchalia and the town  
 Of Eurytus the Œchalian, had for chiefs  
 Two sons of Æsculapius, healers both,  
 And skilful, — Podalirius one, and one 915  
 Machaon. Thirty hollow barks were theirs.

The dwellers of Ormenium, they whose homes  
 Were by the Hyperian fount, and they  
 Who held Asterium and the snowy peaks  
 Of Titanus, obeyed Eurypylus, 920  
 Evæmon's son, and far renowned. A fleet  
 Of forty dark-ribbed vessels followed him.

Those who possessed Argissa, those who held  
 Gyrtonè, Orthè, and Helonè, those  
 Who dwelt in Oloösso with white walls, 925  
 The sturdy warrior Polypœtes led,  
 Son of Pirithoüs, who derived his birth  
 From deathless Jove. Hippodameia bore  
 The warrior to Pirithoüs on the day  
 When he took vengeance on the shaggy brood 930  
 Of Centaurs, and from Pelion drove them forth  
 To Æthicæ. Yet not alone in rule  
 Was Polypœtes, for Leonteus, sprung  
 From the large-souled Coronus, Cæneus' son,  
 Shared with him the command. With them a fleet  
 Of forty dark-hulled vessels came to Troy. 936

Then Guneus came, with two and twenty ships  
 From Cythus. Under his command he held  
 The Enienes, and that sturdy race,  
 The Peribœan warriors, and the men 940

Who built on cold Dodona, or who tilled  
The fields where pleasant Titaresius flows  
And into Peneus pours his gentle stream,  
Yet with its silver eddies mingles not,  
But floats upon the current's face like oil, — 945  
A Stygian stream by which the immortals swear.

With Prothoüs, Tenthredon's son, there came  
The warriors of Magnesia, who abode  
By Peneus, and by Pelion hung with woods ;  
Swift-footed Prothoüs led these. They came 950  
With forty dark-hulled galleys to the war.

These were the chiefs and princes of the Greeks.  
Say, Muse, who most excelled among the kings,  
And which the noblest steeds, of all that came  
With the two sons of Atreus to the war ? 955

The noblest steeds were those in Pheræ bred,  
That, guided by Eumelus, flew like birds, —  
Alike in hue and age ; the plummet showed  
Their height the same, and both were mares, and,  
reared

By Phœbus of the silver bow among 960  
The meadows of Pieria, they became  
The terror of the bloody battle-field.

The mightiest of the chiefs, while yet in wrath  
Achilles kept aloof, was Ajax, son  
Of Telamon ; yet was Pelides far 965

The greater warrior, and the steeds which bore  
That perfect hero were of noblest breed.  
In his beaked galleys, swift to cut the sea,

Achilles lay, meanwhile, and nursed the wrath  
 He bore to Agamemnon, Atreus' son, 970  
 The shepherd of the people. On the beach  
 His warriors took their sport with javelins  
 And quoits and bows, while near the chariots tied  
 The horses, standing, browsed on lotus-leaves  
 And parsley from the marshes. But beneath 975  
 The tents the closely covered chariots stood,  
 While idly through the camp the charioteers,  
 Hither and thither sauntering, missed the sight  
 Of their brave lord and went not to the field.

The army swept the earth as when a fire 980  
 Devours the herbage of the plains. The ground  
 Groaned under them as when the Thunderer Jove  
 In anger with his lightnings smites the earth  
 About Typhœus—where they say he lies—  
 In Arimi. So fearfully the ground 985  
 Groaned under that swift army as it moved.

Now to the Trojans the swift Iris came  
 A messenger from ægis-bearing Jove,  
 Tidings of bale she brought. They all had met—  
 Old men and youths—in council at the gates 990  
 Of Priam's mansion. There did Iris take  
 Her station near the multitude, and spake,  
 In voice and gesture like Polites, son  
 Of Priam, who, confiding in his speed,  
 Had stood a watcher for the sons of Troy 995  
 On aged Æsyeta's lofty tomb,  
 To give them warning when the Achaian host

Should issue from their galleys. Thus disguised,  
Swift Iris spake her message from the skies : —

“ Father ! thou art delighted with much speech,  
As once in time of peace, but now ’t is war, 1001  
Inevitable war, and close at hand.

I have seen many battles, yet have ne’er  
Beheld such armies, and so vast as these, —  
In number like the sands and summer leaves. 1005  
They march across the plain, prepared to give  
Battle beneath the city walls. To thee,  
O Hector, it belongs to heed my voice  
And counsel. Many are the allies within  
The walls of this great town of Priam, men 1010  
Of diverse race and speech. Let every chief  
Of these array his countrymen for war,  
And give them orders for the coming fight.”

She spake, and Hector heeded and obeyed  
The counsel of the goddess ; he dismissed 1015  
The assembly ; all the Trojans rushed to arms,  
And all the gates were opened. Horse and foot  
Poured forth together in tumultuous haste.

In the great plain before the city stands  
A mound of steep ascent on every side ; 1020  
Men named it Batia, but the gods  
Called it the swift Myrinna’s tomb ; and here  
Mustered the sons of Troy and their allies.

Great Hector of the beamy helm, the son  
Of Priam, led the Trojan race. The host 1025  
Of greatest multitude was marshalled there,

And there the bravest, mighty with the spear.

Æneas marshalled the Dardanian troops, —

The brave son of Anchises. Venus bore

The warrior to Anchises on the heights

1030

Of Ida, where the mortal lover met

The goddess. Yet he ruled them not alone ;

Two chiefs, Antenor's sons Archelochus

And Acamas, were with him in command,

Expert in all the many arts of war.

1035

The Trojans from Zeleia, opulent men,

Who drank the dark Æsepus, — over these

Ruled Pandarus, Lycaon's valiant son,

To whom the god Apollo gave his bow.

The troops from Adrasteia, they who dwelt

1040

Within Apæsus' walls, or tilled the soil

Of Pityeia and Tereia's heights,

Were led by Amphius and Adrastus, clad

In linen corselets for the war, the sons

Of Merops the Percosian, skilled beyond

1045

All other men in the diviner's art.

Nor would he that his sons should seek the field

Of slaughter. They obeyed him not ; the fates

Decreed their early death and urged them on.

The dwellers of Percote, Practium,

1050

And Sestus, and Abydus, and divine

Arisba, followed Asius, great among

The heroes and the son of Hyrtacus, —

Asius, who came with strong and fiery steeds,

Borne from Arisba and from Selleis' banks.

1055

Hippothoüs over the Pelasgian tribes —  
 Skilled spearman, who abode among the fields  
 Of the deep-soiled Larissa — bore command, —  
 Hippothoüs with Pylæus, who derived  
 Their race from Mars, and for their father claimed  
 Pelasgian Lethus, son of Teutamus. 1061

And Acamas, and Peiroüs, valiant chief,  
 Were captains of the Thracian men, whose fields  
 Were bounded by the rushing Hellespont.  
 Euphemus led the Cicones, expert 1065  
 To wield the spear in fight. The nobly-born  
 Trœzenus was his father. Ceas' son  
 Pyræchmes with Pæonia's archers came  
 From the broad Axius in far Amydon, —  
 Axius, the fairest river of the earth. 1070

Pylæmenes, a chief of fearless heart,  
 Led from the region of the Eneti,  
 Where first the stubborn race of mules was bred,  
 The Paphlagonian warriors, they who held  
 Cytorus, Sesamus, and fair abodes 1075  
 Built where Parthenius wanders on, and those  
 Who dwelt in Cromna and Ægialus,  
 And on the lofty Erythinian heights.

And Hodus and Epistrophus led on  
 The Halezonians from the distant land 1080  
 Of Alyba, where ores of silver lie.  
 And Chromis and the augur Ennomus  
 Were leaders of the Mysians ; but his skill  
 Saved not the augur from the doom of death,

Slain by the swift of foot, Æacides, 1085  
 With other men of Troy where Xanthus flows.  
 And Phorcys and Ascanius, who was like  
 A god in beauty, led the Phrygian troops  
 From far Ascania, eager for the fray.  
 And Antiphus and Mesthles were the chiefs 1090  
 Of the Mæonian warriors, reared beside  
 The ships of Tmolus. There Gygæa's lake  
 Brought forth both chieftains to Pylæmenes.

Nastes was leader of the Carian troops,  
 Who spake in barbarous accents and possessed 1095  
 Miletus and the leafy mountain heights  
 Where dwell the Phthirians, and Mæander's stream,  
 And airy peaks of Mycalè. O'er these  
 Amphimachus and Nastes held command, —  
 Amphimachus and Nastes, far renowned 1100  
 Sons of Nomion, him who, madly vain,  
 Went to the battle pranked like a young girl  
 In golden ornaments. They spared him not  
 The bitter doom of death ; he fell beneath  
 The hand of swift Æacides within 1105  
 The river's channel. There the great in war,  
 Achilles, spoiled Nomion of his gold.

Sarpedon and the noble Glaucus bore  
 Rule o'er the Lycians coming from afar,  
 Where eddying Xanthus runs through Lycia's meads.

## BOOK III.

NOW when both armies were arrayed for war,  
Each with its chiefs, the Trojan host moved on  
With shouts and clang of arms, as when the cry  
Of cranes is in the air, that, flying south  
From winter and its mighty breadth of rain, 5  
Wing their way over ocean, and at dawn  
Bring fearful battle to the pygmy race,  
Bloodshed and death. But silently the Greeks  
Went forward, breathing valor, mindful still  
To aid each other in the coming fray. 10

As when the south wind shrouds a mountain-top  
In vapors that awake the shepherd's fear, —  
A surer covert for the thief than night, —  
And round him one can only see as far  
As one can hurl a stone, — such was the cloud 15  
Of dust that from the warriors' trampling feet  
Rose round their rapid march and filled the air.

Now drew they near each other, face to face,  
And Paris in the Trojan van pressed on,  
In presence like a god. A leopard's hide 20  
Was thrown across his shoulders, and he bore  
A crooked bow and falchion. Brandishing  
Two brazen-pointed javelins, he defied  
To mortal fight the bravest of the Greeks.

Him, Menelaus, loved of Mars, beheld 25  
Advancing with large strides before the rest ;

And as a hungry lion who has made  
A prey of some large beast — a hornèd stag  
Or mountain goat — rejoices, and with speed  
Devours it, though swift hounds and sturdy youths 30  
Press on his flank, so Menelaus felt  
Great joy when Paris, of the godlike form,  
Appeared in sight, for now he thought to wreak  
His vengeance on the guilty one, and straight  
Sprang from his car to earth with all his arms. 35

But when the graceful Paris saw the chief  
Come toward him from the foremost ranks, his heart  
Was troubled, and he turned and passed among  
His fellow-warriors and avoided death.

As one, who meets within a mountain glade 40  
A serpent, starts aside with sudden fright,  
And takes the backward way with trembling limbs  
And cheeks all white, — the graceful Paris thus  
Before the son of Atreus shrank in fear,  
And mingled with the high-souled sons of Troy. 45  
Hector beheld and thus upbraided him  
Harshly : “ O luckless Paris, nobly formed,  
Yet woman-follower and seducer ! Thou  
Shouldst never have been born, or else at best  
Have died unwedded ; better were it far, 50  
Than thus to be a scandal and a scorn  
To all who look on thee. The long-haired Greeks,  
How they will laugh, who for thy gallant looks  
Deemed thee a hero, when there dwells in thee  
No spirit and no courage ? Wast thou such 55

When, crossing the great deep in thy stanch ships  
With chosen comrades, thou didst make thy way  
Among a stranger-people and bear off  
A beautiful woman from that distant land,  
Allied by marriage-ties to warrior-men, — 60  
A mischief to thy father and to us  
And all the people, to our foes a joy,  
And a disgrace to thee? Why couldst thou not  
Await Atrides? Then hadst thou been taught  
From what a valiant warrior thou didst take 65  
His blooming spouse. Thy harp will not avail,  
Nor all the gifts of Venus, nor thy locks,  
Nor thy fair form, when thou art laid in dust.  
Surely the sons of Troy are faint of heart,  
Else hadst thou, for the evil thou hast wrought, 70  
Been laid beneath a coverlet of stone."

Then Paris, of the godlike presence, spake  
In answer: "Hector, thy rebuke is just;  
Thou dost not wrong me. Dauntless is thy heart;  
'T is like an axe when, wielded by the hand 75  
That hews the shipwright's plank, it cuts right  
through,  
Doubling the wielder's force. Such tameless heart  
Dwells in thy bosom. Yet reproach me not  
With the fair gifts which golden Venus gave.  
Whatever in their grace the gods bestow 80  
Is not to be rejected: 't is not ours  
To choose what they shall give us. But if thou  
Desirest to behold my prowess shown

In combat, cause the Trojans and the Greeks  
 To pause from battle, while, between the hosts, 85  
 I and the warlike Menelaus strive  
 In single fight for Helen and her wealth.  
 Whoever shall prevail and prove himself  
 The better warrior, let him take with him  
 The treasure and the woman, and depart ; 90  
 While all the other Trojans, having made  
 A faithful league of amity, shall dwell  
 On Ilium's fertile plain, and all the Greeks  
 Return to Argos, famed for noble steeds,  
 And to Achaia, famed for lovely dames." 95

He spake, and Hector, hearing him, rejoiced,  
 And went between the hosts, and with his spear,  
 Held by the middle, pressed the phalanxes  
 Of Trojans back, and made them all sit down.  
 The long-haired Greeks meanwhile, with bended  
 bows, 100

Took aim against him, just about to send  
 Arrows and stones ; but Agamemnon, king  
 Of men, beheld, and thus he cried aloud : —

“ Restrain yourselves, ye Argives ; let not fly  
 Your arrows, ye Achaians ; Hector asks — 105  
 He of the beamy helmet asks to speak.”

He spake, and they refrained, and all, at once,  
 Were silent. Hector then stood forth and said : —

“ Harken, ye Trojans and ye nobly-armed  
 Achaians, to what Paris says by me. 110  
 He bids the Trojans and the Greeks lay down

Their shining arms upon the teeming earth,  
And he and Menelaus, loved of Mars,  
Will strive in single combat, on the ground  
Between the hosts, for Helen and her wealth ; 115  
And he who shall o'ercome, and prove himself  
The better warrior, to his home shall bear  
The treasure and the woman, while the rest  
Shall frame a solemn covenant of peace."

He spake, and both the hosts in silence heard. 120  
Then Menelaus, great in battle, said :—

"Now hear me also, — me whose spirit feels  
The wrong most keenly. I propose that now  
The Greeks and Trojans separate reconciled,  
For greatly have ye suffered for the sake 125  
Of this my quarrel, and the original fault  
Of Paris. Whomsoever fate ordains  
To perish, let him die ; but let the rest  
Be from this moment reconciled, and part.  
And bring an offering of two lambs — one white, 130  
The other black — to Earth and to the Sun,  
And we ourselves will offer one to Jove.  
And be the mighty Priam here, that he  
May sanction this our compact, — for his sons  
Are arrogant and faithless, — lest some hand 135  
Wickedly break the covenant of Jove.  
The younger men are of a fickle mood ;  
But when an elder shares the act he looks  
Both to the past and future, and provides  
What is most fitting and the best for all." 140

He spake, and both the Greeks and Trojans heard  
 His words with joy, and hoped the hour was come  
 To end the hard-fought war. They reined their  
 steeds

Back to the ranks, alighted, and put off  
 Their armor, which they laid upon the ground 145  
 Near them in piles, with little space between.

Then Hector sent two heralds forth with speed  
 Into the town, to bring the lambs and call  
 King Priam. Meanwhile Agamemnon bade  
 Talthymbius seek the hollow ships and find 150  
 A lamb for the altar. He obeyed the words  
 Of noble Agamemnon, king of men.

Meanwhile to white-armed Helen Iris came  
 A messenger. She took a form that seemed  
 Laodice, the sister of Paris, whom 155  
 Antenor's son, King Helicaon, wed, —  
 Fairest of Priam's daughters. She drew near  
 To Helen, in the palace, weaving there  
 An ample web, a shining double-robe,  
 Whereon were many conflicts fairly wrought, 160  
 Endured by the horse-taming sons of Troy  
 And brazen-mailed Achaïans for her sake  
 Upon the field of Mars. Beside her stood  
 Swift-footed Iris, and addressed her thus : —

“Dear lady, come and see the Trojan knights 165  
 And brazen-mailed Achaïans doing things  
 To wonder at. They who, in this sad war,  
 Eager to slay each other, lately met

In murderous combat on the field, are now  
 Seated in silence, and the war hath ceased. 170  
 They lean upon their shields, their massive spears  
 Are near them, planted in the ground upright.  
 Paris, and Menelaus, loved of Mars,  
 With their long lances will contend for thee,  
 And thou wilt be declared the victor's spouse." 175

She said, and in the heart of Helen woke  
 Dear recollections of her former spouse  
 And of her home and kindred. Instantly  
 She left her chamber, robed and veiled in white,  
 And shedding tender tears; yet not alone, 180  
 For with her went two maidens,—Æthra, child  
 Of Pitheus, and the large-eyed Clymene.  
 Straight to the Scæan gates they walked, by which  
 Panthoüs, Priam, and Thymætēs sat,  
 Lampus and Clytius, Hicetaon sprung 185  
 From Mars, Antenor and Ucalegon,  
 Two sages, — elders of the people all.  
 Beside the gates they sat, unapt, through age,  
 For tasks of war, but men of fluent speech,  
 Like the cicadas that within the wood 190  
 Sit on the trees and utter delicate sounds.  
 Such were the nobles of the Trojan race  
 Who sat upon the tower. But when they marked  
 The approach of Helen, to each other thus  
 With winged words, but in low tones, they said : — 195

“ Small blame is theirs, if both the Trojan knights  
 And brazen-mailed Achæians have endured

So long so many evils for the sake  
Of that one woman. She is wholly like  
In feature to the deathless goddesses. 200  
So be it : let her, peerless as she is,  
Return on board the fleet, nor stay to bring  
Disaster upon us and all our race."

So spake the elders. Priam meantime called  
To Helen : "Come, dear daughter, sit by me. 205  
Thou canst behold thy former husband hence,  
Thy kindred and thy friends. I blame thee not ;  
The blame is with the immortals who have sent  
These pestilent Greeks against me. Sit and name  
For me this mighty man, the Grecian chief, 210  
Gallant and tall. True, there are taller men ;  
But of such noble form and dignity  
I never saw : in truth, a kingly man."

And Helen, fairest among women, thus  
Answered : "Dear second father, whom at once 215  
I fear and honor, would that cruel death  
Had overtaken me before I left,  
To wander with thy son, my marriage-bed,  
And my dear daughter, and the company  
Of friends I loved. But that was not to be ; 220  
And now I pine and weep. Yet will I tell  
What thou dost ask. The hero whom thou seest  
Is the wide-ruling Agamemnon, son  
Of Atreus, and is both a gracious king  
And a most dreaded warrior. He was once 225  
Brother-in-law to me, if I may speak —

Lost as I am to shame — of such a tie.”

She said, the aged man admired, and then  
He spake again : “ O son of Atreus, born  
Under a happy fate, and fortunate 230  
Among the sons of men ! A mighty host  
Of Grecian youths obey thy rule. I went  
To Phrygia once, — that land of vines, — and there  
Saw many Phrygians, heroes on fleet steeds,  
The troops of Otreus, and of Mygdon, shaped 235  
Like one of the immortals. They encamped  
By the Sangarius. I was an ally ;  
My troops were ranked with theirs upon the day  
When came the unsexed Amazons to war.  
Yet even there I saw not such a host 240  
As this of black-eyed Greeks who muster here.”

Then Priam saw Ulysses, and inquired : —  
“ Dear daughter, tell me also who is that,  
Less tall than Agamemnon, yet more broad  
In chest and shoulders. On the teeming earth 245  
His armor lies, but he, from place to place,  
Walks round among the ranks of soldiery,  
As when the thick-fleeced father of the flocks  
Moves through the multitude of his white sheep.”

And Jove-descended Helen answered thus : — 250  
“ That is Ulysses, man of many arts,  
Son of Laertes, reared in Ithaca,  
That rugged isle, and skilled in every form  
Of shrewd device and action wisely planned.”

Then spake the sage Antenor : “ Thou hast said 255

The truth, O lady. This Ulysses once  
Came on an embassy, concerning thee,  
To Troy with Menelaus, great in war ;  
And I received them as my guests, and they  
Were lodged within my palace, and I learned 260  
The temper and the qualities of both.  
When both were standing 'mid the men of Troy,  
I marked that Menelaus's broad chest  
Made him the more conspicuous, but when both  
Were seated, greater was the dignity 265  
Seen in Ulysses. When they both addressed  
The council. Menelaus briefly spake  
In pleasing tones, though with few words, — as one  
Not given to loose and wandering speech, — although  
The younger. When the wise Ulysses rose, 270  
He stood with eyes cast down, and fixed on earth,  
And neither swayed his sceptre to the right  
Nor to the left, but held it motionless,  
Like one unused to public speech. He seemed  
An idiot out of humor. But when forth 275  
He sent from his full lungs his mighty voice,  
And words came like a fall of winter snow,  
No mortal then would dare to strive with him  
For mastery in speech. We less admired  
The aspect of Ulysses than his words." 280

Beholding Ajax then, the aged king  
Asked yet again : " Who is that other chief  
Of the Achaians, tall, and large of limb, —  
Taller and broader-chested than the rest ? "

Helen, the beautiful and richly-robed, 285  
Answered : " Thou seest the mighty Ajax there,  
The bulwark of the Greeks. On the other side,  
Among his Cretans, stands Idomeneus,  
Of godlike aspect, near to whom are grouped  
The leaders of the Cretans. Oftentimes 290  
The warlike Menelaus welcomed him  
Within our palace, when he came from Crete.  
I could point out and name the other chiefs  
Of the dark-eyed Achaians. Two alone,  
Princes among their people, are not seen, — 295  
Castor the fearless horseman, and the skilled  
In boxing, Pollux, — twins ; one mother bore  
Both them and me. Came they not with the rest  
From pleasant Lacedæmon to the war ?  
Or, having crossed the deep in their good ships, 300  
Shun they to fight among the valiant ones  
Of Greece, because of my reproach and shame ? "

She spake ; but they already lay in earth  
In Lacedæmon, their dear native land.

And now the heralds through the city bore 305  
The sacred pledges of the gods, — two lambs,  
And joyous wine, the fruit of Earth, within  
A goat-skin. One of them — Idæus — brought  
A glistening vase and golden drinking-cups,  
And summoned, in these words, the aged king : — 310

" Son of Laomedon, arise ! The chiefs  
Who lead the Trojan knights and brazen-mailed  
Achaians pray thee to descend at once

Into the plain, that thou mayst ratify  
A faithful compact. Alexander now 315  
And warlike Menelaus will contend  
With their long spears for Helen. She and all  
Her treasures are to be the conqueror's prize ;  
While all the other Trojans, having made  
A faithful league of amity, shall dwell 320  
On Ilium's fertile plain, and all the Greeks  
Return to Argos, famed for noble steeds,  
And to Achaia, famed for lovely dames."

He spake, and Priam, shuddering, heard and bade  
The attendants yoke the horses to his car. 325  
Soon were they yoked ; he mounted first and drew  
The reins ; Antenor took a place within  
The sumptuous car, and through the Scæan gates  
They guided the fleet coursers toward the field.

Now when the twain had come where lay the  
                  hosts 330  
Of Trojans and Achaians, down they stepped  
Upon the teeming earth, and went among  
The assembled armies. Quickly, as they came,  
Rose Agamemnon, king of men, and next  
Uprose the wise Ulysses. To the spot 335  
The illustrious heralds brought the sacred things  
That bind a treaty, and with mingled wine  
They filled a chalice, and upon the hands  
Of all the kings poured water. Then the son  
Of Atreus drew a dagger which he wore 340  
Slung by his sword's huge sheath, and clipped away

The forelocks of the lambs, and parted them  
Among the Trojan and Achaian chiefs,  
And stood with lifted hands and prayed aloud :—

“O Father Jupiter, who rulest all 345  
From Ida, mightiest, most august ! and thou,  
O all-beholding and all-hearing Sun !  
Ye Rivers, and thou Earth, and ye who dwell  
Beneath the earth and punish after death  
Those who have sworn false oaths, bear witness ye, 350  
And keep unbroken this day's promises.  
If Alexander in the combat slay  
My brother Menelaus, he shall keep  
Helen and all her wealth, while we return  
Homeward in our good ships. If, otherwise, 355  
The bright-haired Menelaus take the life  
Of Alexander, Helen and her wealth  
Shall be restored, and they of Troy shall pay  
Such fine as may be meet, and may be long  
Remembered in the ages yet to come. 360  
And then if, after Alexander's fall,  
Priam and Priam's sons refuse the fine,  
I shall make war for it, and keep my place  
By Troy until I gain the end I seek.”

So spake the king, and with the cruel steel 365  
Cut the lambs' throats, and laid them on the ground,  
Panting and powerless, for the dagger took  
Their lives away. Then over them they poured  
Wine from the chalice, drawn in golden cups,  
And prayed to the ever-living gods ; and thus 370

Were Trojans and Achaïans heard to say : —

“O Jupiter most mighty and august !  
Whoever first shall break these solemn oaths,  
So may their brains flow down upon the earth, —  
Theirs and their children’s, — like the wine we pour,  
And be their wives the wives of other men.” 376

Such was the people’s vow. Saturnian Jove  
Confirmed it not. Then Priam, of the line  
Of Dardanus, addressed the armies thus : —

“Hear me, ye Trojans, and ye well-greaved  
Greeks ! 380

For me I must return to wind-swept Troy.  
I cannot bear, with these old eyes, to look  
On my dear son engaged in desperate fight  
With Menelaus, the beloved of Mars.

Jove and the ever-living gods alone 385  
Know which of them shall meet the doom of death.”

So spake the godlike man, and placed the lambs  
Within his chariot, mounted, and drew up  
The reins. Antenor by him took his place  
Within the sumptuous chariot. Then they turned  
The horses and retraced their way to Troy. 391

But Hector, son of Priam, and the great  
Ulysses measured off a fitting space,  
And in a brazen helmet, to decide  
Which warrior first should hurl the brazen spear,  
They shook the lots, while all the people round  
Lifted their hands to heaven and prayed the gods ;  
And thus the Trojans and Achaïans said : —

“O Father Jove, who rulest from the top  
 Of Ida, mightiest one and most august ! 400  
 Whichever of these twain has done the wrong,  
 Grant that he pass to Pluto’s dwelling, slain,  
 While friendship and a faithful league are ours.”

So spake they. Hector of the beamy helm  
 Looked back and shook the lots. Forth leaped at  
 once 405

The lot of Paris. Then they took their seats  
 In ranks beside their rapid steeds, and where  
 Lay their rich armor. Paris the divine,  
 Husband of bright-haired Helen, there put on  
 His shining panoply, — upon his legs 410  
 Fair greaves, with silver clasps, and on his breast  
 His brother’s mail, Lycaon’s, fitting well  
 His form. Around his shoulders then he hung  
 His silver-studded sword, and stout, broad shield,  
 And gave his glorious brows the dreadful helm, 415  
 Dark with its horse-hair plume. A massive spear  
 Filled his right hand. Meantime the warlike son  
 Of Atreus clad himself in like array.

And now when both were armed for fight, and each  
 Had left his host, and, coming forward, walked 420  
 Between the Trojans and the Greeks, and frowned  
 Upon the other, a mute wonder held  
 The Trojan cavaliers and well-greaved Greeks.  
 There near each other in the measured space  
 They stood in wrathful mood with lifted spears. 425

First Paris hurled his massive spear ; it smote

The round shield of Atrides, but the brass  
Broke not beneath the blow ; the weapon's point  
Was bent on that strong shield. The next assault  
Atrides Menelaus made, but first

439

Offered this prayer to Father Jupiter : —

“ O sovereign Jove ! vouchsafe that I avenge  
On guilty Paris wrongs which he was first  
To offer ; let him fall beneath my hand,  
That men may dread hereafter to requite  
The friendship of a host with injury.”

435

He spake, and flung his brandished spear ; it  
smote

The round shield of Priamides ; right through  
The shining buckler went the rapid steel,  
And, cutting the soft tunic near the flank,  
Stood fixed in the fair corselet. Paris bent  
Sideways before it and escaped his death.

449

Atrides drew his silver-studded sword,  
Lifted it high and smote his enemy's crest.

The weapon, shattered to four fragments, fell.

445

He looked to the broad heaven, and thus ex-  
claimed : —

“ O Father Jove ! thou art of all the gods  
The most unfriendly. I had hoped to avenge  
The wrong by Paris done me, but my sword  
Is broken in my grasp, and from my hand  
The spear was vainly flung and gave no wound.”

450

He spake, and, rushing forward, seized the helm  
Of Paris by its horse-hair crest, and turned

And dragged him toward the well-armed Greeks.  
Beneath

His tender throat the embroidered band that held <sup>455</sup>  
The helmet to the chin was choking him.

And now had Menelaus dragged him thence,  
And earned great glory, if the child of Jove,  
Venus, had not perceived his plight in time.

She broke the ox-hide band ; an empty helm <sup>460</sup>  
Followed the powerful hand ; the hero saw,  
Swung it aloft and hurled it toward the Greeks,  
And there his comrades seized it. He again  
Rushed with his brazen spear to slay his foe.

But Venus — for a goddess easily <sup>465</sup>

Can work such marvels — rescued him, and, wrapped  
In a thick shadow, bore him from the field

And placed him in his chamber, where the air  
Was sweet with perfumes. Then she took her way  
To summon Helen. On the lofty tower <sup>470</sup>

She found her, midst a throng of Trojan dames,  
And plucked her perfumed robe. She took the form  
And features of a spinner of the fleece,

An aged dame, who used to comb for her  
The fair white wool in Lacedæmon's halls, <sup>475</sup>

And loved her much. In such an humble guise  
The goddess Venus thus to Helen spake : —

“ Come hither, Alexander sends for thee ;

He now is in his chamber and at rest

On his carved couch ; in beauty and attire <sup>480</sup>

Resplendent, not like one who just returns

From combat with a hero, but like one  
 Who goes to mingle in the choral dance,  
 Or, when the dance is ended, takes his seat."

She spake, and Helen heard her, deeply moved ;  
 Yet when she marked the goddess's fair neck, 486  
 Beautiful bosom, and soft, lustrous eyes,  
 Her heart was touched with awe, and thus she said :—

" Strange being ! why wilt thou delude me still ?  
 Wouldst thou decoy me further on among 490  
 The populous Phrygian towns, or those that stud  
 Pleasant Mæonia, where there haply dwells  
 Some one of mortal race whom thou dost deign  
 To make thy favorite. Hast thou seen, perhaps,  
 That Menelaus, having overpowered 495  
 The noble Alexander, seeks to bear  
 Me, hated as I must be, to his home ?  
 And hast thou therefore fallen on this device ?  
 Go to him, sit by him, renounce for him  
 The company of gods, and never more 500  
 Return to heaven, but suffer with him ; watch  
 Beside him till he take thee for his wife  
 Or handmaid. Thither I shall never go,  
 To adorn his couch and to disgrace myself.  
 The Trojan dames would taunt me. O, the griefs 505  
 That press upon my soul are infinite ! "

Displeased, the goddess Venus answered : " Wretch,  
 Incense me not, lest I abandon thee '  
 In anger, and detest thee with a zeal  
 As great as is my love, and lest I cause 510

Trojans and Greeks to hate thee, so that thou  
 Shalt miserably perish." Thus she spake ;  
 And Helen, Jove-begotten, struck with awe,  
 Wrapped in a robe of shining white, went forth  
 In silence from amidst the Trojan dames, 515  
 Unheeded, for the goddess led the way.

When now they stood beneath the sumptuous roof  
 Of Alexander, straightway did the maids  
 Turn to their wonted tasks, while she went up,  
 Fairest of women, to her chamber. There 520  
 The laughing Venus brought and placed a seat  
 Right opposite to Paris. Helen sat,  
 Daughter of ægis-bearing Jove, with eyes  
 Averted, and reproached her husband thus :—

“Com'st thou from battle? Rather would that  
 thou 525

Hadst perished by the mighty hand of him  
 Who was my husband. It was once, I know,  
 Thy boast that thou wert more than peer in strength  
 And power of hand, and practice with the spear,  
 To warlike Menelaus. Go then now, 530  
 Defy him to the combat once again.  
 And yet I counsel thee to stand aloof,  
 Nor rashly seek a combat, hand to hand,  
 With fair-haired Menelaus, lest perchance  
 He smite thee with his spear and thou be slain.” 535

Then Paris answered : “Woman, chide me not  
 Thus harshly. True it is, that, with the aid  
 Of Pallas, Menelaus hath obtained

The victory ; but I may vanquish him  
In turn, for we have also gods with us. 540  
Give we the hour to dalliance ; never yet  
Have I so strongly proved the power of love, —  
Not even when I bore thee from thy home  
In pleasant Lacedæmon, traversing  
The deep in my good ships, and in the isle 545  
Of Cranaë made thee mine, — such glow of love  
Possesses me, and sweetness of desire.”

He spake, and to the couch went up ; his wife  
Followed, and that fair couch received them both.

Meantime Atrides, like a beast of prey, 550  
Went fiercely ranging through the crowd in search  
Of godlike Alexander. None of all  
The Trojans, or of their renowned allies,  
Could point him out to Menelaus, loved  
Of Mars ; and had they known his lurking-place 555  
They would not for his sake have kept him hid,  
For like black death they hated him. Then stood  
Among them Agamemnon, king of men,  
And spake : “ Ye Trojans and Achaians, hear,  
And ye allies. The victory belongs 560  
To warlike Menelaus. Ye will then  
Restore the Argive Helen and her wealth,  
And pay the fitting fine, which shall remain  
A memory to men in future times.”

Thus spake the son of Atreus, and the rest 565  
Of the Achaian host approved his words.

## BOOK IV.

**M**EANTIME the immortal gods with Jupiter  
 Upon his golden pavement sat and held  
 A council. Hebe, honored of them all,  
 Ministered nectar, and from cups of gold  
 They pledged each other, looking down on Troy. 5  
 When, purposely to kindle Juno's mood  
 To anger, Saturn's son, with biting words  
 That well betrayed his covert meaning, spake :—

“ Two goddesses — the Argive Juno one,  
 The other Pallas, her invincible friend — 10  
 Take part with Menelaus, yet they sit  
 Aloof, content with looking on, while still  
 Venus, the laughter-loving one, protects  
 Her Paris, ever near him, warding off  
 The stroke of fate. Just now she rescued him 15  
 When he was near his death. The victory  
 Belongs to Menelaus, loved of Mars.  
 Now let us all consider what shall be  
 The issue, — whether we allow the war,  
 With all its waste of life, to be renewed, 20  
 Or cause the warring nations to sit down  
 In amity. If haply it shall be  
 The pleasure and the will of all the gods,  
 Let Priam's city keep its dwellers still,  
 And Menelaus lead his Helen home.” 25

He spake, but Juno and Minerva sat,

And with closed lips repined, for secretly  
They plotted evil for the Trojan race.  
Minerva held her peace in bitterness  
Of heart and sore displeased with Father Jove. 30  
But Juno could not curb her wrath, and spake : —

“What words, austere Saturnius, hast thou said !  
Wilt thou then render vain the toils I bear,  
And all my sweat? My very steeds even now  
Are weary with the mustering of the host 35  
That threaten woe to Priam and his sons.  
Yet do thy will ; but be at least assured  
That all the other gods approve it not.”

The cloud-compelling Jupiter replied  
In anger : “Pestilent one ! what grievous wrong 40  
Hath Priam done to thee, or Priam’s sons,  
That thou shouldst persevere to overthrow  
His noble city? Shouldst thou through the gates  
Of Ilium make thy way, and there devour,  
Within the ramparts, Priam and his sons 45  
And all the men of Troy alive, thy rage  
Haply might be appeased. Do as thou wilt,  
So that this difference breed no lasting strife  
Between us. Yet I tell thee this, — and thou  
Bear what I say in mind : In time to come, 50  
Should I design to level in the dust  
Some city where men dear to thee are born,  
Seek not to thwart my vengeance, but submit.  
For now I fully yield me to thy wish,  
Though with unwilling mind. Wherever dwell 55

The race of humankind beneath the sun  
And starry heaven, of all their cities Troy  
Has been by me most honored, — sacred Troy, —  
And Priam, and the people who obey  
Priam, the wielder of the ashen spear; 60  
For there my altars never lacked their rites, —  
Feasts, incense, and libations duly paid.”

Then Juno, the majestic, with large eyes,  
Rejoined : “ The cities most beloved by me  
Are three, — Mycenæ, with her spacious streets, 65  
Argos, and Sparta. Raze them to the ground,  
If they be hateful to thee. I shall ne’er  
Contend to save them, nor repine to see  
Their fall ; for, earnestly as I might seek  
To rescue them from ruin, all my aid 70  
Would not avail, so much the mightier thou.  
Yet doth it ill become thee thus to make  
My efforts vain. I am a goddess, sprung  
From the same stock with thee ; I am the child  
Of crafty Saturn, and am twice revered, — 75  
Both for my birth and that I am the spouse  
Of thee who rulest over all the gods.  
Now let us each yield somewhat, — I to thee  
And thou to me ; the other deathless gods  
Will follow us. Let Pallas be despatched 80  
To that dread battle-field on which are ranged  
The Trojans and Achaians, and stir up  
The Trojan warriors first to lift their hands  
Against the elated Greeks and break the league.”

She ended, and the Father of the gods 85  
And mortals instantly complied, and called  
Minerva, and in wingèd accents said :—  
“Haste to the battle-field, and there, among  
The Trojan and Achaian armies, cause  
The Trojan warriors first to lift their hands 90  
Against the elated Greeks and break the league.”

So saying, Jupiter to Pallas gave  
The charge she wished already. She in haste  
Shot from the Olympian summits, like a star  
Sent by the crafty Saturn's son to warn 95  
The seamen or some mighty host in arms, —  
A radiant meteor scattering sparkles round.  
So came and lighted Pallas on the earth  
Amidst the armies. All who saw were seized  
With wonder, — Trojan knights and well-armed  
Greeks ; 100

And many a one addressed his comrade thus : —  
“Sure we shall have the wasting war again,  
And stubborn combats ; or, it may be, Jove,  
The arbiter of wars among mankind,  
Decrees that the two nations dwell in peace.” 105

So Greeks and Trojans said. The goddess went  
Among the Trojan multitude disguised ;  
She seemed Laodocus, Antenor's son,  
A valiant warrior, seeking through the ranks  
For godlike Pandarus. At length she found 110  
Lycaon's gallant and illustrious son,  
Standing with bucklered warriors ranged around,

Who followed him from where Æsepus flows ;  
And, standing near, she spake these wingèd words :—

“ Son of Lycaon ! wilt thou hear my words, 115  
Brave as thou art ? Then wilt thou aim a shaft  
At Menelaus ; thus wilt thou have earned  
Great thanks and praise from all the men of Troy,  
And chiefly from Prince Paris, who will fill,  
Foremost of all, thy hands with lavish gifts, 120  
When he shall look on Menelaus slain —  
The warlike son of Atreus — by thy hand,  
And laid upon his lofty funeral pile.  
Aim now at Menelaus the renowned  
An arrow, while thou offerest a vow 125  
To Lycian Phœbus, mighty with the bow,  
That thou wilt bring to him a hecatomb  
Of firstling lambs, when thou again shalt come  
Within thine own Zeleia's sacred walls.”

So spake Minerva, and her words o'ercame 130  
The weak one's purpose. He uncovered straight  
His polished bow, made of the elastic horns  
Of a wild goat, which, from his lurking-place,  
As once it left its cavern lair, he smote,  
And pierced its breast, and stretched it on the rock.  
Full sixteen palms in length the horns had grown 136  
From the goat's forehead. These an artisan  
Had smoothed, and, aptly fitting each to each,  
Polished the whole and tipped the work with gold.  
To bend that bow, the warrior lowered it 140  
And pressed an end against the earth. His friends

Held up, meanwhile, their shields before his face,  
Lest the brave sons of Greece should lift their spears  
Against him ere the champion of their host,  
The warlike Menelaus, should have felt 145  
The arrow. Then the Lycian drew aside  
The cover from his quiver, taking out  
A well-fledged arrow that had never flown, —  
A cause of future sorrows. On the string  
He laid that fatal arrow, while he made 150  
To Lycian Phœbus, mighty with the bow,  
A vow to sacrifice before his shrine  
A noble hecatomb of firstling lambs  
When he should come again to his abode  
Within his own Zeleia's sacred walls. 155  
Grasping the bowstring and the arrow's notch,  
He drew them back, and forced the string to meet  
His breast, the arrow-head to meet the bow,  
Till the bow formed a circle. Then it twanged.  
The cord gave out a shrilly sound ; the shaft 160  
Leaped forth in eager haste to reach the host.

Yet, Menelaus, then the blessed gods,  
The deathless ones, forgot thee not ; and first,  
Jove's daughter, gatherer of spoil, who stood  
Before thee, turned aside the deadly shaft. 165  
As when a mother, while her child is wrapped  
In a sweet slumber, scares away the fly,  
So Pallas turned the weapon from thy breast,  
And guided it to where the golden clasps  
Made fast the belt, and where the corselet's mail 170

Was doubled. There the bitter arrow struck  
The belt, and through its close contexture passed,  
And fixed within the well-wrought corselet stood,  
Yet reached the plated quilt which next his skin  
The hero wore, — his surest guard against 175  
The weapon's force, — and broke through that  
alike ;

And there the arrow gashed the part below,  
And the dark blood came gushing from the wound.  
As when some Carian or Mæonian dame  
Tinges with purple the white ivory, 180  
To form a trapping for the cheeks of steeds, —  
And many a horseman covets it, yet still  
It lies within her chamber, to become  
The onarment of some great monarch's steed  
And make its rider proud, — thy shapely thighs, 185  
Thy legs, and thy fair ankles thus were stained,  
O Menelaus ! with thy purple blood.

When Agamemnon, king of men, beheld  
The dark blood flowing from his brother's wound,  
He shuddered. Menelaus, great in war, 190  
Felt the like horror ; yet, when he perceived  
That still the arrow, neck and barb, remained  
Without the mail, the courage rose again  
That filled his bosom. Agamemnon, then,  
The monarch, sighing deeply, took the hand 195  
Of Menelaus, — while his comrades round  
Like him lamented, — sighing as he spake : —

“ Dear brother, when I sent thee forth alone

To combat with the Trojans for the Greeks,  
I ratified a treaty for thy death, — 200  
Since now the Trojans smite and under foot  
Trample the league. Yet not in vain shall be  
The treaty, nor the blood of lambs, nor wine  
Poured to the gods, nor right hands firmly pledged ;  
For though it please not now Olympian Jove 205  
To make the treaty good, he will in time  
Cause it to be fulfilled, and they shall pay  
Dearly with their own heads and with their wives  
And children for this wrong. And this I know  
In my undoubting mind, — a day will come 210  
When sacred Troy and Priam and the race  
Governed by Priam, mighty with the spear,  
Shall perish all. Saturnian Jove, who sits  
On high, a dweller of the upper air,  
Shall shake his dreadful ægis in the sight 215  
Of all, indignant at this treachery.  
Such the event will be ; but I shall grieve  
Bitterly, Menelaus, if thou die,  
Thy term of life cut short. I shall go back  
To my dear Argos with a brand of shame 220  
Upon me. For the Greeks will soon again  
Bethink them of their country ; we shall then  
Leave Argive Helen to remain the boast  
Of Priam and the Trojans, — while thy bones  
Shall moulder, mingling with the earth of Troy, — 225  
Our great design abandoned. Then shall say  
Some haughty Trojan, leaping on the tomb

Of Menelaus : ' So in time to come  
May Agamemnon wreak his wrath, as here  
He wreaked it, whither he had vainly led 30  
An army, and now hastens to his home  
And his own land, with ships that bear no spoil,  
And the brave Menelaus left behind.'  
So shall some Trojan say ; but, ere that time,  
May the earth open to receive my bones ! " 235

The fair-haired Menelaus cheerfully  
Replied : " Grieve not, nor be the Greeks alarmed  
For me, since this sharp arrow has not found  
A vital part, but, ere it reached so far,  
The embroidered belt, the quilt beneath, and plate 240  
Wrought by the armorer's cunning, broke its force."

King Agamemnon took the word and said : —  
" Dear Menelaus ! would that it were so,  
Yet the physician must explore thy wound,  
And with his balsams soothe the bitter pain." 245  
Then turning to Talthybius, he addressed  
The sacred herald : " Hasten with all speed,  
Talthybius ; call Machaon, warrior-son  
Of Æsculapius, that much-honored leech,  
And bring him to the Achaian general, 250  
The warlike Menelaus, whom some hand  
Of Trojan or of Lycian, skilled to bend  
The bow, hath wounded with his shaft, — a deed  
For him to exult in, but a grief to us."

He spake ; nor failed the herald to obey, 255  
But hastened at the word and passed among

The squadrons of Achaia, mailed in brass,  
 In search of great Machaon. Him he found  
 As midst the valiant ranks of bucklered men  
 He stood, — the troops who followed him to war <sup>260</sup>  
 From Triccæ, nurse of steeds. Then, drawing near,  
 The herald spake to him in wingèd words :—

“ O son of Æsculapius, come in haste.  
 King Agamemnon calls thee to the aid  
 Of warlike Menelaus, whom some hand <sup>263</sup>  
 Of Trojan or of Lycian, skilled to bend  
 The bow, hath wounded with his shaft, — a deed  
 For him to exult in, but a grief to us.”

Machaon's heart was touched, and forth they went  
 Through the great throng, the army of the Greeks. <sup>270</sup>  
 And when they came where Atreus' warlike son  
 Was wounded, they perceived the godlike man  
 Standing amid a circle of the chiefs,  
 The bravest of the Achaians, who at once  
 Had gathered round. Without delay he drew <sup>275</sup>  
 The arrow from the fairly-fitted belt.  
 The barbs were bent in drawing. Then he loosed  
 The embroidered belt, the quilted vest beneath,  
 And plate, — the armorer's work, — and carefully  
 O'erlooked the wound where fell the bitter shaft, <sup>280</sup>  
 Cleansed it from blood, and sprinkled over it  
 With skill the soothing balsams which of yore  
 The friendly Chiron to his father gave.

While round the warlike Menelaus thus  
 The chiefs were busy, all the Trojans moved <sup>285</sup>

Into array of battle ; they put on  
 Their armor, and were eager for the fight.  
 Then wouldst thou not have seen, hadst thou been  
     there,

King Agamemnon slumbering, or in fear,  
 And skulking from the combat, but alert, 230  
 Preparing for the glorious tasks of war.

His horses, and his chariot bright with brass,  
 He left, and bade Eurymedon, his groom,  
 The son of Ptolemy Piraides,

Hold them apart still panting, yet with charge 295  
 To keep them near their master, till the hour  
 When he should need them, weary with the toil  
 Of such a vast command. Meantime he went  
 On foot among his files of soldiery,

And whomsoe'er he found with fiery steeds 300  
 Hastening to battle, thus he cheered them on : —

“ O Argives ! let not your hot courage cool,  
 For Father Jove will never take the part  
 Of treachery. Whosoe'er have been the first  
 To break the league, upon their lifeless limbs 305  
 Shall vultures feast ; and doubt not we shall bear  
 Away in our good ships the wives they love  
 And their young children, when we take their town.”

But whomsoe'er he saw that kept afar  
 From the dread field, he angrily rebuked : — 310

“ O Argives ! who with arrows only fight,  
 Base as ye are, have ye no sense of shame ?  
 Why stand ye stupefied, like fawns, that, tired

With coursing the wide pastures, stop at last,  
Their strength exhausted ! Thus ye stand amazed,  
Nor think of combat. Wait ye for the hour 316  
When to your ships, with their fair-sculptured prows,  
Moored on the borders of the hoary deep,  
The Trojans come, that haply ye may see  
If the great hand of Jove will shield you then ? ” 320

Thus Agamemnon, as supreme in power,  
Threaded the warrior-files, until he came  
Where stood the Cretans. All in arms they stood  
Around Idomeneus, the great in war.  
Like a wild boar in strength, he led the van, 325  
And, in the rear, Meriones urged on  
His phalanxes. The king of men rejoiced,  
And blandly thus bespoke Idomeneus : —

“ Idomeneus ! I honor thee above  
The other knights of Greece, as well in war 330  
As in all other labors, and no less  
In banquets, when the Achaian nobles charge  
Their goblets with the dark-red mingled wine  
In sign of honor. All the other Greeks  
Drink by a certain measure, but thy cup 335  
Stands ever full, like mine, that thou mayst drink  
When thou desirest. Hasten to the war  
With all the valor thou dost glory in.”

The Cretan chief, Idomeneus, replied : —  
“ Atrides, I remain thy true ally, 340  
As I have pledged my faith. But thou exhort  
The other long-haired Greeks, and bid them rush

To combat, since the Trojans break their oath.  
For woe and death must be the lot of those  
Who broke the peace they vowed so solemnly.” 345

He spake. The son of Atreus, glad at heart,  
Passed on among the squadrons, till he came  
To where the warriors Ajax formed their ranks  
For battle, with a cloud of infantry.

As when some goatherd from the hill-top sees 350  
A cloud that traverses the deep before  
A strong west wind, — beholding it afar,  
Pitch-black it seems, and bringing o’er the waves  
A whirlwind with it ; he is seized with fear,  
And drives his flock to shelter in a cave, — 355  
So with the warriors Ajax to the war

Moved, dense and dark, the phalanxes of youths  
Trained for the combat, and their serried files  
Bristling with spears and shields. The king of men  
Saw with delight, and spake these wingèd words : —

“ O warriors Ajax, leaders of the Greeks 361

In brazen armor, I enjoin you not  
To rouse the courage of your soldiery.  
Such word would ill become me, for yourselves  
Have made your followers eager to engage 365  
In manful combat. Would to Jupiter,  
To Pallas, and Apollo, that there dwelt  
In every bosom such a soul as yours !  
Then would the city of King Priam fall  
At once, o’erthrown and levelled by our hands.” 370

Thus having said, he left them and went on

To others. There he found the smooth of speech,  
Nestor, the Pylian orator, employed  
In marshalling his squadrons. Near to him  
Alastor and the large-limbed Pelagon, 375  
Chromius, and Hæmon, prince among his tribe,  
And Bias, shepherd of the people, stood.  
The cavalry with steeds and cars he placed  
In front. A vast and valiant multitude  
Of infantry he stationed in the rear; 380  
To be the bulwark of the war. Between  
He made the faint of spirit take their place,  
That, though unwillingly, they might be forced  
To combat with the rest. And first he gave  
His orders to the horsemen, bidding them 385  
To keep their coursers reined, nor let them range  
At random through the tumult of the crowd : —

“ And let no man, too vain of horsemanship,  
And trusting in his valor, dare advance  
Beyond the rest to attack the men of Troy, 390  
Nor let him fall behind the rest, to make  
Our ranks the weaker. Whoso from his car  
Can reach an enemy's, let him stand and strike  
With his long spear, for 't is the shrewder way.  
By rules like these, which their brave hearts obeyed,  
The men of yore laid level towns and towers.” 396

The aged man, long versed in tasks of war,  
Counselled them thus. King Agamemnon heard,  
Delighted, and in wingèd words he said : —

“ O aged man, would that thy knees were firm 400

As is thy purpose, and thy strength as great !  
But age, the common fate of all, has worn  
Thy frame : would that some others had thy age,  
And thou wert of the number of our youths ! ”

Then answered Nestor, the Gerenian knight : —  
“ O son of Atreus, I myself could wish 406  
That I were now as when of yore I struck  
The high-born Ereuthalion down. The gods  
Bestow not all their gifts on man at once.  
If I were then a youth, old age in turn 410  
Is creeping o’er me. Still I keep among  
The knights, and counsel and admonish them, —  
The office of the aged. Younger men,  
They who can trust their strength, must wield the  
spear.”

He spake. The son of Atreus passed him by, 415  
Pleased with his words, and, moving onward, came  
Where — with the Athenians, ever prompt to raise  
The war-cry, grouped around him — stood the  
knight

Menestheus, son of Peteus. Near to these  
Was wise Ulysses, with his sturdy band 420  
Of Cephalonians. None of these had heard  
The clamor of the battle, for the hosts  
Of Trojan knights and Greeks had just begun  
To move, and there they waited for the advance  
Of other squadrons marching on to charge 425  
The Trojans and begin the war anew.  
The king of men, Atrides, was displeased,

And spake, and chid them thus with wingèd words :—

“ O son of Peteus, foster-child of Jove,  
And thou, the man of craft and evil wiles ! 430  
Why stand ye here aloof, irresolute,  
And wait for others ? Ye should be the first  
To meet the foe and stem the battle's rage.  
I bid you first to banquets which the Greeks .  
Give to their leaders, where ye feast at will 435  
On roasted meats and bowls of pleasant wine.  
Now, ere ye move, ye willingly would see  
Ten Grecian squadrons join the deadly strife.”

The man of many arts, Ulysses, spake, 439  
And frowned : “ O Atreus' son ! what words are these  
Which pass thy lips ? How canst thou say that we  
Avoid the battle ? Ever when the Greeks  
Seek bloody conflict with the Trojan knights,  
Thou, if thou wilt, and if thou givest heed  
To things like these, shalt with thine eyes behold 445  
The father of Telemachus engaged  
In combat with the foremost knights that form  
The Trojan van. Thou utterest empty words.”

King Agamemnon, when he saw the chief  
Offended, changed his tone, and, smiling, said : — 450

“ Son of Laertes, nobly-born and wise  
Ulysses ! It is not for me to chide  
Nor to exhort thee, for thy heart, I know,  
Counsels thee kindly toward me, and thy thought  
Agrees with mine. We will discuss all this 455  
Hereafter. If just now too harsh a word

Was uttered, may the immortals make it vain !”

So saying, he departed, and went on

To others. By his steeds and by his car,

That shone with fastenings of brass, he found 460

The son of Tydeus, large-souled Diomed,

And Sthenelus, the son of Capaneus,

Standing beside him. Looking at them both,

King Agamemnon to Tydides spake

In wingèd words, and thus reproved the chief :— 465

“ O son of Tydeus, that undaunted knight !

What is there to appall thee ? Why look through

The spaces that divide the warlike ranks ?

Not thus did Tydeus feel the touch of fear,

But ever foremost of his warriors fought. 470

So they declare who saw his deeds, for I

Was never with him, nor have ever seen

The hero. Yet they say that he excelled

All others. Certain is it that he once

Entered Mycenæ as a friendly guest, 475

With no array of soldiery, but came

With godlike Polynices. ’T was the time

When warrior-bands were gathered to besiege

The sacred walls of Thebes, and earnestly

They prayed that from Mycenæ they might lead 480

Renowned auxiliars to the war, and we

Would willingly have given the aid they asked, —

For we approved the prayer, — but Jove, with signs

Of angry omen, changed our purposes.

The chiefs departed, journeying on to where 485

Asopus flows through reeds and grass, and thence  
 The Achæians sent an embassy to Thebes  
 By Tydeus. There he met the many sons  
 Of Cadmus at the banquets in the hall  
 Of valiant Eteocles. Though alone 490  
 Among so many, and a stranger-guest,  
 The hero feared them not, but challenged them  
 To vie with him in games ; and easily  
 He won the victory, such aid was given  
 By Pallas. Then the sons of Cadmus, skilled 495  
 In horsemanship, were wroth, and privily  
 Sent fifty armèd youths to lie in wait  
 For his return. Two leaders had the band, —  
 Maion, the son of Hæmon, like a god  
 In form, and Lycophontes, brave in war, 500  
 Son of Autophonos. A bloody death  
 Did Tydeus give the youths. He slew them all  
 Save Maion, whom he suffered to return,  
 Obedient to an omen from the gods.  
 Such was Ætolian Tydeus ; but his son, 505  
 A better speaker, is less brave in war.”

He spake ; and valiant Diomed, who heard  
 The king's reproof with reverence, answered not.  
 Then spake the son of honored Capaneus : —

“ Atrides, speak not falsely, when thou know'st 510  
 The truth so well. Assuredly we claim  
 To be far braver than our fathers were.  
 We took seven-gated Thebes with fewer troops  
 Than theirs, when, trusting in the omens sent

From heaven, and in the aid of Jupiter, 515  
We led our men beneath the city walls  
Sacred to Mars. Our fathers perished there  
Through their own folly. Therefore never seek  
To place them in the same degree with us."

The brave Tydides with a frown replied : — 520  
"Nay, hold thy peace, my friend, and heed my words.  
Of Agamemnon I will not complain, —  
The shepherd of the people ; it is his  
To exhort the well-armed Greeks to gallant deeds.  
Great glory will attend him if the Greeks 525  
Shall overcome the Trojans, and shall take  
The sacred Ilium ; but his grief will be  
Bitter if we shall fail and be destroyed.  
Hence think we only of the furious charge !"

He spake, and from his chariot leaped to earth 530  
All armed ; the mail upon the monarch's breast  
Rang terribly as he marched swiftly on.  
The boldest might have heard that sound with fear.

As when the ocean-billows, surge on surge,  
Are pushed along to the resounding shore 535  
Before the western wind, and first a wave  
Uplifts itself, and then against the land  
Dashes and roars, and round the headland peaks  
Tosses on high and spouts its spray afar,  
So moved the serried phalanxes of Greece 540  
To battle, rank succeeding rank, each chief  
Giving command to his own troops ; the rest  
Marched noiselessly : you might have thought no  
voice

Was in the breasts of all that mighty throng,  
So silently they all obeyed their chiefs, 545  
Their showy armor glittering as they moved  
In firm array. But, as the numerous flock  
Of some rich man, while the white milk is drawn  
Within his sheepfold, hear the plaintive call  
Of their own lambs, and bleat incessantly, — 550  
Such clamors from the mighty Trojan host  
Arose ; nor was the war-cry one, nor one  
The voice, but words of mingled languages,  
For they were called from many different climes.  
These Mars encouraged to the fight ; but those 555  
The blue-eyed Pallas. Terror too was there,  
And Fright, and Strife that rages unappeased, —  
Sister and comrade of man-slaying Mars, —  
Who rises small at first, but grows, and lifts  
Her head to heaven and walks upon the earth. 560  
She, striding through the crowd and heightening  
The mutual rancor, flung into the midst  
Contention, source of bale to all alike.

And now, when met the armies in the field,  
The ox-hide shields encountered, and the spears, 565  
And might of warriors mailed in brass ; then clashed  
The bossy bucklers, and the battle-din  
Was loud ; then rose the mingled shouts and groans  
Of those who slew and those who fell ; the earth  
Ran with their blood. As when the winter streams  
Rush down the mountain-sides, and fill, below, 571  
With their swift waters, poured from gushing springs,

Some hollow vale, the shepherd on the heights  
Hears the far roar, — such was the mingled din  
That rose from the great armies when they met. 575

Then first Antilochus, advancing, struck  
The Trojan champion Echepolus down,  
Son of Thalysius, fighting in the van.  
He smote him on the helmet's cone, where streamed  
The horse-hair plume. The brazen javelin stood 580  
Fixed in his forehead, piercing through the bone,  
And darkness gathered o'er his eyes. He fell  
As falls a tower before some stubborn siege.

Then Elephenor, son of Chalcodon,  
Prince of the brave Abrantes, by the foot 585  
Seized the slain chieftain, dragging him beyond  
The reach of darts, to strip him of his arms ;  
Yet dropped him soon, for brave Agenor saw,  
And, as he stooped to drag the body, hurled  
His brazen spear and pierced the uncovered side 590  
Seen underneath the shield. At once his limbs  
Relaxed their hold, and straight the spirit fled.  
Then furious was the struggle of the Greeks  
And Trojans o'er the slain ; they sprang like wolves  
Upon each other, and man slaughtered man. 595

Then by the hand of Ajax Telamon  
Fell Simoïsius, in the bloom of youth,  
Anthemion's son. His mother once came down  
From Ida, with her parents, to their flocks  
Beside the Simoïs ; there she brought him forth 600  
Upon its banks, and gave her boy the name

Of Simoïsius. Unrequited now

Was all the care with which his parents nursed  
His early years, and short his term of life, —  
Slain by the hand of Ajax, large of soul. 605

For, when he saw him coming, Ajax smote  
Near the right pap the Trojan's breast ; the blade  
Passed through, and out upon the further side.  
He fell among the dust of earth, as falls

A poplar growing in the watery soil 620  
Of some wide marsh, — a fair, smooth bole, with  
boughs

Only on high, which with his gleaming axe  
Some artisan has felled to bend its trunk  
Into the circle of some chariot-wheel ;  
Withering it lies upon the river's bank. 625

So did the high-born Ajax spoil the corpse  
Of Simoïsius, Anthemion's son.

But Antiphus, the son of Priam, clad  
In shining armor, saw, and, taking aim,  
Cast his sharp spear at Ajax through the crowd. 630  
The weapon struck him not, but pierced the groin  
Of one who was Ulysses' faithful friend, —  
Leucus, — as from the spot he dragged the dead ;  
He fell, the body dropping from his hold.

Ulysses, stung with fury at his fall, 633  
Rushed to the van, arrayed in shining brass,  
Drew near the foe, and, casting a quick glance  
Around him, hurled his glittering spear. The host  
Of Trojans, as it left his hand, shrank back

Upon each other. Not in vain it flew, 630  
But struck Democoön, the spurious son  
Of Priam, who, to join the war, had left  
Abydos, where he tended the swift mares.  
Ulysses, to revenge his comrade's death,  
Smote him upon the temple with his spear. 635  
Through both the temples passed the brazen point,  
And darkness gathered o'er his eyes ; he fell,  
His armor clashing round him with his fall.  
Then did the foremost bands, and Hector's self,  
Fall back. The Argives shouted, dragging off 640  
The slain, and rushing to the ground they won.  
Then was Apollo angered, looking down  
From Pergamus, and thus he called aloud : —

“ Rally, ye Trojans ! tamers of fleet steeds !  
Yield not the battle to the Greeks. Their limbs 645  
Are not of stone or iron, to withstand  
The trenchant steel ye wield. Nor does the son  
Of fair-haired Thetis now, Achilles, take  
Part in the battle, but sits, brooding o'er  
The choler that devours him, in his ships.” 650

Thus from the city spake the terrible god.  
Meantime Tritonian Pallas, glorious child  
Of Jupiter, went through the Grecian ranks  
Where'er they wavered, and revived their zeal.

Diores, son of Amarynceus, then 655  
Met his hard fate. The fragment of a rock  
Was thrown by hand at his right leg, and struck  
The ankle. Piroüs, son of Imbrasus,

Who came from Ænus, leading to the war  
His Thracian soldiers, flung it ; and it crushed 664  
Tendons and bones, and down the warrior fell  
In dust, and toward his comrades stretched his hands,  
And gasped for breath. But he who gave the wound,  
Piroüs, came up and pierced him with his spear.  
Forth gushed the entrails, and the eyes grew dark. 665

But Piroüs by Ætolian Thoas fell,  
Who met him with his spear and pierced his breast  
Above the pap. The brazen weapon stood  
Fixed in the lungs. Then Thoas came and plucked  
The massive spear away, and drew his sword, 670  
And thrusting through him the sharp blade, he took  
His life away. Yet could he not despoil  
The slain man of his armor, for around  
His comrades thronged, the Thracians, with their  
tufts

Of streaming hair, and, wielding their long spears, 675  
Drove him away. And he, though huge of limb,  
And valiant and renowned, was forced to yield  
To numbers pressing on him, and withdrew.  
Thus near each other stretched upon the ground  
Piroüs, the leader of the Thracian band, 680  
And he who led the Epeans, brazen-mailed  
Diores, lay with many others slain.

Then could no man, who near at hand beheld  
The battle of that day, see cause of blame  
In aught, although, unwounded and unbruised 685  
By weapons, Pallas led him by the hand

In safety through the midst, and turned aside  
The violence of javelins ; for that day  
Saw many a Trojan slain, and many a Greek,  
Stretched side by side upon the bloody field. 600

## BOOK V.

THEN Pallas to Tydides Diomed  
Gave strength and courage, that he might  
appear

Among the Achaians greatly eminent,  
And win a glorious name. Upon his head  
And shield she caused a constant flame to play, 5  
Like to the autumnal star that shines in heaven  
Most brightly when new-bathed in ocean tides.  
Such light she caused to beam upon his crest  
And shoulders, as she sent the warrior forth  
Into the thick and tumult of the fight. 10

Among the Trojans, Dares was the priest  
Of Vulcan, rich and blameless. His two sons  
Were Phegeus and Idæus, trained in all  
The arts of war. They left the host and came  
To meet Tydides, — on the chariot they, 15  
And he on foot ; and now, as they drew near,  
First Phegeus hurled his massive lance. It flew  
O'er Diomed's left shoulder and struck not.  
Tydides cast his spear, and not in vain ;

It smote the breast of Phegeus in the midst, 20  
And dashed him from his seat. Idæus leaped  
To earth, and left the sumptuous car, nor dared  
To guard the slain, yet would have met his death  
If Vulcan had not borne him swiftly thence  
Concealed in darkness, that he might not leave 25  
The aged man, his father, desolate.

The son of Tydeus took the steeds, and bade  
His comrades lead them to the fleet. Aghast  
The valiant sons of Troy beheld the sons  
Of Dares, one in flight, the other slain. 30

Meantime the blue-eyed Pallas took the hand  
Of Mars, and thus addressed the fiery god : —

“ Mars, Mars, thou slayer of men, thou steeped  
in blood,

Destroyer of walled cities ! should we not  
Leave both the Greeks and Trojans to contend, 35  
And Jove to crown with glory whom he will,  
While we retire, lest we provoke his wrath ? ”

Thus having said, she led the violent Mars  
From where the battle raged, and made him sit  
Beside Scamander, on its grassy bank. 40

And then the Achaians put the sons of Troy  
To flight : each leader slew a foe ; and first  
The king of men, Atrides, from his car  
Struck down the huge-limbed Hodius, who was chief  
Among the Halizonians. As he turned 45  
To flee, the Achaian, smiting him between  
The shoulders, drove the javelin through his breast.

Heavily clashed his armor as he fell.

Then by Idomeneus was Phæstus slain,  
Son of Meonian Borus, who had come 50  
From Tarna, rich in harvests. As he sprang  
Into his car, Idomeneus, expert  
To wield the ponderous javelin, thrust its blade  
Through his right shoulder. From the car he fell,  
And the dark night of death came over him. 55  
The Achaian warriors following spoiled the slain.

The son of Atreus, Menelaus, slew  
With his sharp spear Scamandrius, the son  
Of Strophius, practised in the forest chase,  
A mighty hunter. Him had Dian taught 60  
To strike whatever beast the woody wild  
Breeds on the hills ; but now availed him not  
The favor of Diana, archer-queen,  
Nor skill to throw the javelin afar ;  
For Menelaus, mighty with the spear, 65  
Followed him as he fled, and in the back  
Smote him, between the shoulder-blades, and drove  
The weapon through. He fell upon the ground  
Headlong, his armor clashing as he fell.  
And then Meriones slew Phereclus, 70  
Son of Harmonius, the artificer,  
Who knew to shape all works of rare device,  
For Pallas loved him. It was he who built  
The fleet for Paris, — cause of many woes  
To all the Trojans and to him, — for ill 75  
He understood the oracles of heaven.

Him did Meriones, pursuing long,  
O'ertake, and, smiting him on the right hip,  
Pierced through the part beneath the bone and near  
The bladder. On his knees with sad lament 80  
He fell, and death involved him in its shade.

And then by Meges was Pedæus slain,  
Antenor's base-born son, whose noble wife,  
Theano, reared him with as fond a care  
As her own children, for her husband's sake. 85  
And now the mighty spearman, Phyleus' son,  
Drew near and smote him with his trenchant lance  
Where meet the head and spine, and pierced the neck  
Beneath the tongue ; and forth the weapon came  
Between the teeth. He fell, and in the fall 90  
Gnashed with his teeth upon the cold bright blade.

Then did Evæmon's son Eurypylus  
Strike down Hypsenor, nobly born, the son  
Of great Dolopion, Scamander's priest,  
Whom all the people honored as a god. 95  
Evæmon's gallant son, o'ertaking him  
In flight, with one stroke of his falchion hewed  
His brawny arm away. The bloody limb  
Dropped to the ground, and the dark night of death  
Came o'er his eyes : so cruel fate decreed. 100

Thus toiled the heroes in that stubborn fight.  
Nor would you now have known to which array —  
Trojan or Greek — Tydides might belong ;  
For through the field he rushed with furious speed,  
Like a swollen river when its current takes 105

The torrent's swiftmess, scattering with a sweep  
The bridges ; nor can massive dikes withstand  
Its fury, nor embankments raised to screen  
The grassy meadows, while the rains of Jove  
Fall heavily, and harvests, late the joy 110  
Of toiling youth, are beaten to the ground.  
Thus by Tydides the close phalanxes  
Of Troy were scattered, nor could they endure,  
All numerous as they were, his strong assault.  
As Pandarus, Lycaon's eminent son, 115  
Beheld Tydides rush athwart the field,  
Breaking the ranks, he drew his crooked bow  
And smote the chief's left shoulder as he came,  
Striking the hollow corselet. The sharp point  
Broke through, and blood came gushing o'er the mail.  
Then called aloud Lycaon's eminent son : — 121

“ Brave Trojans, great in mastery of steeds,  
Press on ; the bravest of the Grecian host  
Is smitten, nor, I think, can long survive  
The grievous wound, if it be true that I, 125  
At the command of Phœbus, son of Jove,  
Have left my home upon the Lycian shore.”

Thus boastfully he spake ; but his swift shaft  
Slew not Tydides, who had now withdrawn.  
And, standing by his steeds and chariot, spake 130  
To Sthenelus, the son of Capaneus : —

“ Haste down, kind Sthenelus, and with thy hand  
Draw the sharp arrow from my shoulder here.”

He spake, and Sthenelus at once leaped down,

Stood by his side, and from his shoulder drew 135  
The wingèd arrow deeply fixed within.

The blood flowed forth upon the twisted rings  
Of mail, while Diomed, the valiant, prayed :—

“ Hear me, O child of agis-bearing Jove,  
Goddess invincible ! if ever thou 140

Didst aid me or my father in the heat  
Of battle, aid me, Pallas, yet again.

Give me to slay this Trojan ; bring him near,  
Within my javelin’s reach, who wounded me,  
And now proclaims — the boaster — that not long  
Shall I behold the brightness of the sun.” 145

So prayed he, and Minerva heard his prayer  
And lightened all his limbs, — his feet, his hands, —  
And, standing near him, spake these wingèd  
words :—

“ War boldly with the Trojans, Diomed ; 150  
For even now I breathe into thy frame  
The ancestral might and fearless soul that dwelt  
In Tydeus, peerless with the steed and shield.  
Lo ! I remove the darkness from thine eyes,  
That thou mayst well discern the gods from men ; 155  
And if a god should tempt thee to the fight,  
Beware to combat with the immortal race ;  
Only, should Venus, child of Jupiter,  
Take part in battle, wound her with thy spear.”

The blue-eyed Pallas spake, and disappeared ; 160  
And Diomed went back into the field  
And mingled with the warriors. If before

His spirit moved him fiercely to engage  
The men of Troy, a threefold courage now  
Inspired him. As a lion who has leaped 165  
Into a fold — and he who guards the flock  
Has wounded but not slain him — feels his rage  
Waked by the blow ; — the affrighted shepherd then  
Ventures not near, but hides within the stalls,  
And the forsaken sheep are put to flight, 170  
And, huddling, slain in heaps, till o'er the fence  
The savage bounds into the fields again ; —  
Such was Tydides midst the sons of Troy.  
Astynoüs first he slew, Hypenor next,  
The shepherd of the people. One he pierced 175  
High on the bosom with his brazen spear,  
And smote the other on the collar-bone  
With his good sword, and hewed from neck and spine  
The shoulder. There he left the dead, and rushed  
To Abas and to Polyeidus, sons 180  
Of old Eurydamas, interpreter  
Of visions. Ill the aged man had read  
His visions when they joined the war. They died†,  
And Diomed, the valiant, spoiled the slain.  
Xanthus and Thoön he encountered next, 185  
The sons of Phænops, born in his old age.  
No other child had he, to be his heir,  
And he was worn with length of years. These two  
Tydides smote and took their lives, and left  
Grief to their father and regretful cares, 190  
Since he no more should welcome their return

From war, and strangers should divide his wealth.  
Then smote he Chromius and Echemon, sons  
Of Dardan Priam, in one chariot both.

As on a herd of beeves a lion springs 195  
While midst the shrubs they browse, and breaks  
their necks, —

Heifer or ox, — so sprang he on the twain  
And struck them, vainly struggling, from their car,  
And spoiled them of their arms, and took their  
steeds,

And bade his comrades lead them to the fleet. 200

Æneas, who beheld him scattering thus  
The embattled ranks before him, straightway went  
Through the thick fight, amid encountering spears,  
In search of godlike Pandarus. He found

Lycaon's blameless and illustrious son, 205  
And stood before him, and addressed him thus : —

“Where is thy bow, O Pandarus, and where  
Thy wingèd arrows? Where the old renown  
In which no warrior here can vie with thee,  
And none upon the Lycian shore can boast 210  
That he excels thee? Hasten, and lift up  
Thy hands in prayer to Jupiter, and send  
An arrow at this man, whoe'er he be,  
Who thus prevails, and thus afflicts our host,  
And makes the knees of many a strong man weak.  
Strike him, — unless he be some god incensed 216  
At Troy for sacrifice withheld, since hard  
It is to bear the anger of a god.”

Lycaon's son, the far-renowned, replied : —  
“ Æneas, leader of the Trojans mailed 220  
In brass, to me this man in all things seems  
Like warlike Diomed. I know his shield,  
High helm, and steeds, and yet I may not say  
That this is not a god. But if he be  
The chief of whom I speak, the warlike son 225  
Of Tydeus, not thus madly would he fight,  
Without some god to aid him. By his side  
Is one of the immortals, with a cloud  
About his shoulders, turning from its aim  
The swiftly flying arrow. 'T was but late 230  
I aimed a shaft that pierced the hollow mail  
On his left shoulder, and I thought him sent  
To Pluto, but I slew him not. Some god  
Must be offended with me. I have here  
No steeds or car to mount. Far off at home 235  
There stand within Lycaon's palace-walls  
Eleven chariots, fair and fresh and new :  
Each has an ample cover, and by each  
Are horses yoked in pairs, that champ their oats  
And their white barley. When I left my home, 240  
Lycaon, aged warrior, counselled me,  
Within his sumptuous halls, that with my steeds  
And chariot I should lead the sons of Troy  
In the fierce battle. I obeyed him not :  
Far better if I had. I wished to spare 245  
My horses, lest, so largely fed at home,  
They might want food in the beleaguered town.

So, leaving them, I came on foot to Troy,  
Confiding in my bow, which yet was doomed  
To avail me little, for already I 250  
Have smitten with my arrows the two chiefs,  
Tydides and Atrides, and from both  
Drew the red blood, but only made their rage  
To flame the fiercer. In an evil hour  
I took my bow and quiver from the wall 255  
And came to lead the Trojans for the sake  
Of Hector. But if ever I return  
To see my native country and my wife  
And my tall spacious mansion, may some foe  
Strike off my head if with these hands I fail 260  
To break my bow in pieces, casting it  
Into the flames, a useless weapon now."

The Trojan chief Æneas, answering, said : —  
"Nay, talk not so ; it cannot but be thus,  
Until upon a chariot, and with steeds, 265  
We try our prowess with this man in war.  
Haste, mount my chariot here, and thou shalt see  
How well are Trojan horses trained to range  
The field of battle, in the swift pursuit  
Hither and thither, or in rapid flight ; 270  
And they shall bring us safely to the town  
Should Jove a second time bestow the meed  
Of glory on Tydides. Haste, and take  
The lash and well-wrought reins, while I descend  
To fight on foot ; or haply thou wilt wait 275  
The foe's advance while I direct the steeds."

Then spake again Lycaon's eminent son : —

“Keep thou the reins, Æneas, and still guide  
The horses. With their wonted charioteer,  
The better shall they bear away the car 280  
Should we be forced to fly before the arm  
Of Diomed ; lest, taking flight, they range  
Unmastered when they hear thy voice no more,  
Nor bear us from the combat, and the son  
Of Tydeus, having slain us, shall lead thence 285  
Thy firm-hoofed coursers. Therefore guide them still,  
Them and the chariot, while, with this keen spear,  
I wait the Greek, as he is rushing on.”

They spake, and, climbing the magnificent car,  
Turned toward Tydides the swift-footed steeds. 290  
The noble son of Capaneus beheld,  
And said in wingèd words to Diomed : —

“Tydides Diomed, most dear of men !  
I see two warriors, strong, immensely strong,  
Coming to combat with thee. Pandarus 295  
Is one, the skilled in archery, who boasts  
To be Lycaon's son ; and by his side  
There comes Æneas, glorying that he sprang  
From the large-souled Anchises, — borne to him  
By Venus. Mount we now our car and leave 300  
The ground, nor in thy fury rush along  
The van of battle, lest thou lose thy life.”

The brave Tydides, with a frown, replied : —  
“Speak not of flight ; thou canst not yet persuade  
My mind to that. To skulk or shrink with fear 305

In battle ill becomes me, and my strength  
Is unexhausted yet. It suits me not  
To mount the chariot ; I will meet the foe  
Just as I am. Minerva will not let  
My spirit falter. Ne'er shall those swift steeds 310  
Bear the two warriors hence, — if even one  
Escapes me. One thing more have I to say ;  
And keep it well in mind. Should Pallas deign —  
The wise, forecasting Pallas — to bestow  
On me the glory of o'ercoming both, 315  
Stop thy swift horses, and tie fast the reins  
To our own chariot, and make haste to seize  
The horses of Æneas, guiding them  
Hence from the Trojan to the Grecian host ;  
For they are of the stock which Jupiter 320  
The Thunderer gave to Tros. It was the price  
He paid for Ganymede, and they, of all  
Beneath the eye of morning and the sun,  
Are of the choicest breed. The king of men,  
Anchises, stealthily and unobserved, 325  
Brought to the coursers of Laomedon  
His brood-mare, and obtained the race. Six colts,  
Their offspring, in his courts were foaled. Of these,  
Four for himself he kept, and in his stalls  
Reared them, and two of them, both apt for war, 330  
He gave Æneas. If we make them ours,  
The exploit will bring us honor and renown."

Thus they conferred. Meantime their foes drew  
near,

Urging their fiery coursers on, and first  
Lycaon's eminent son addressed the Greek :— 335

“ My weapon, swift and sharp, the arrow, failed  
To slay thee ; let me try the javelin now,  
And haply that, at least, may reach its mark.”

He spake, and, brandishing his massive spear,  
Hurled it against the shield of Diomed. 340

The brazen point broke through, and reached the  
mail.

Then shouted with loud voice Lycaon's son : —

“ Ha ! thou art wounded in thy flank ; my spear  
Bites deep ; nor long, I think, canst thou survive,  
And great will be my glory gained from thee.” 345

But thus the valiant Diomed replied,  
Incapable of fear : “ Thy thought is wrong.  
I am not wounded, and I well perceive  
That ye will never give the conflict o'er  
Till one of you, laid low amid the dust, 350  
Pour out his blood to glut the god of war.”

He spake, and cast his spear. Minerva kept  
The weapon faithful to its aim. It struck  
The nose, and near the eye ; then passing on  
Betwixt the teeth, the unrelenting edge 355  
Cleft at its root the tongue ; the point came out  
Beneath the chin. The warrior from his car  
Fell headlong ; his bright armor, fairly wrought,  
Clashed round him as he fell ; his fiery steeds  
Started aside with fright ; his breath and strength 360  
Were gone at once. Æneas, with his shield

And his long spear, leaped down to guard the slain,

That the Achaians might not drag him thence.

There, lion-like, confiding in his strength,

He stalked around the corpse, and over it 365

Held his round shield and lance, prepared to slay

Whoever came, and shouting terribly.

Tydides raised a stone, — a mighty weight,

Such as no two men living now could lift ;

But he, alone, could swing it round with ease. 370

With this he smote Æneas on the hip,

Where the thigh joins its socket. By the blow

He brake the socket and the tendons twain,

And tore the skin with the rough, jagged stone.

The hero fell upon his knees, but stayed 375

His fall with his strong palm upon the ground ;

And o'er his eyes a shadow came like night.

Then had the king of men, Æneas, died,

But for Jove's daughter, Venus, who perceived

His danger instantly, — his mother, she 380

Who bore him to Anchises when he kept

His beeves, a herdsman. Round her son she cast

Her white arms, spreading over him in folds

Her shining robe, to be a fence against

The weapons of the foe, lest some Greek knight 385

Should at his bosom aim the steel to take

His life. And thus the goddess bore away

From that fierce conflict her belovèd son.

Nor did the son of Capaneus forget

The bidding of the warlike Diomed, 390  
But halted his firm-footed steeds apart  
From the great tumult, with the long reins stretched  
And fastened to the chariot. Next, he sprang  
To seize the horses with fair-flowing manes,  
That drew the chariot of Æneas. These 395  
He drave away, far from the Trojan host,  
To the well-greaved Achæians, giving them  
In charge, to lead them to the hollow ships,  
To his beloved friend Deïpylus,  
Whom he of all his comrades honored most, 400  
As likest to himself in years and mind.  
And then he climbed his car and took the reins,  
And, swiftly drawn by his firm-footed steeds,  
Followed Tydides, who with cruel steel  
Sought Venus, knowing her unapt for war, 405  
And all unlike the goddesses who guide  
The battles of mankind, as Pallas does,  
Or as Bellona, ravager of towns.  
O'ertaking her at last, with long pursuit,  
Amid the throng of warring men, the son 410  
Of warlike Tydeus aimed at her his spear,  
And wounded in her hand the delicate one  
With its sharp point. It pierced the ambrosial robe,  
Wrought for her by the Graces, at the spot  
Where the palm joins the wrist, and broke the skin,  
And drew immortal blood, — the ichor, — such 416  
As from the blessed gods may flow ; for they  
Eat not the wheaten loaf, nor drink dark wine ;

And therefore they are bloodless, and are called  
Immortal. At the stroke the goddess shrieked, 420  
And dropped her son. Apollo in his arms  
Received and in a dark cloud rescued him,  
Lest any of the Grecian knights should aim  
A weapon at his breast to take his life.

Meantime the brave Tydides cried aloud : — 425

“ Leave wars and battle, goddess. Is it not  
Enough that thou delude weak womankind?  
Yet, if thou ever shouldst return, to bear  
A part in battle, thou shalt have good cause  
To start with fear, when war is only named.” 430

He spake ; and she departed, wild with pain,  
For grievously she suffered. Instantly  
Fleet-footed Iris took her by the hand  
And led her from the place, her heart oppressed  
With anguish and her fair cheek deathly pale. 435  
She found the fiery Mars, who had withdrawn  
From that day’s combat to the left, and sat,  
His spear and his swift coursers hid from sight,  
In darkness. At his feet she fell, and prayed  
Her brother fervently, that he would lend 440  
His steeds that stood in trappings wrought of gold : —

“ Dear brother, aid me ; let me have thy steeds  
To bear me to the Olympian mount, the home  
Of gods, for grievously the wound I bear  
Afflicts me. ’T was a mortal gave the wound, — 445  
Tydides, who would even fight with Jove.”

She spake ; and Mars resigned to her his steeds

With trappings of bright gold. She climbed the car,  
Still grieving, and, beside her, Iris took  
Her seat, and caught the reins and plied the lash. 459  
On flew the coursers, on, with willing speed,  
And soon were at the mansion of the gods  
On high Olympus. There the active-limbed,  
Fleet Iris stayed them, loosed them from the car,  
And fed them with ambrosial food. Meanwhile, 455  
The goddess Venus at Dione's feet  
Had cast herself. The mother round her child  
Threw tenderly her arms, and with her hand  
Caressed her brow, and spake, and thus inquired:—

“Which of the dwellers of the skies, dear child, 460  
Has dealt thus cruelly with thee, as one  
Caught in the doing of some flagrant wrong?”

And thus did Venus, queen of smiles, reply:—  
“The son of Tydeus, arrogant Diomed,  
Wounded me as I sought to bear away 465  
From battle's dangers my beloved son  
Æneas, dear beyond all other men:  
For now no longer does the battle rage  
Between the Greeks and Trojans, but the Greeks  
Venture to combat even with the gods.” 470

Dione, great among the goddesses,  
Rejoined: “Submit, my daughter, and endure,  
Though inly grieved; for many of us who dwell  
Upon the Olympian mount have suffered much  
From mortals, and have brought great miseries 475  
Upon each other. First, it was the fate

Of Mars to suffer, when Aloëus' sons,  
Otus and mighty Ephialtes, made  
Their fetters fast upon his limbs. He lay  
Chained thirteen months within a brazen cell ; 480  
And haply there the god, whose thirst of blood  
Is never cloyed, had perished, but for aid  
Which Eribœa gave, the beautiful,  
His step-mother. She made his miseries known  
To Mercury, who set him free by stealth, 485  
Withered and weak with long imprisonment.  
And Juno suffered when Amphitryon's son,  
The valiant, dared to plant in her right breast  
A three-pronged arrow, and she writhed with pain.  
And Pluto suffered, when the hero-son 490  
Of ægis-bearing Jove, with a swift shaft,  
Smote him beside the portals of the dead,  
And left him filled with pain. He took his way  
To high Olympus and the home of Jove,  
Grieving and racked with pain, for deep the dart 495  
Had pierced his brawny shoulder, torturing him.  
There Pæan with his pain-dispelling balms  
Healed him, for he was not of mortal race.  
O daring man and reckless, to make light  
Of such impieties and violate 500  
The sacred persons of the Olympian gods !  
It was the blue-eyed Pallas who stirred up  
Tydides to assail thee thus. The fool !  
He knew not that the man who dares to meet  
The gods in combat lives not long. No child 505

Shall prattling call him father when he comes  
 Returning from the dreadful tasks of war.  
 Let then Tydides, valiant though he be,  
 Beware lest a more potent foe than thou  
 Encounter him, and lest the nobly-born 510  
 Ægialeia, in some night to come —  
 Wise daughter of Adrastus, and the spouse  
 Of the horse-tamer Diomed — call up  
 The servants of her household from their sleep,  
 Bewailing him to whom in youth she gave 515  
 Her maiden troth, — the bravest of the Greeks.”

She spake, and wiped the ichor from the hand  
 Of Venus ; at her touch the hand was healed  
 And the pain left it. Meantime Pallas stood,  
 With Juno, looking on, both teasing Jove 520  
 With words of sarcasm. Blue-eyed Pallas thus  
 Addressed the god : “ O Father Jupiter,  
 Wilt thou be angry at the word I speak ? —  
 As Venus, wheedling some Achaian dame  
 To join the host she loves, the sons of Troy, 525  
 Caressed the fair, arrayed in gay attire,  
 A golden buckle scratched her tender hand.”

As thus she spake, the Father of the gods  
 And mortals, calling golden Venus near,  
 Said, with a smile : “ Nay, daughter, not for thee 530  
 Are tasks of war ; be gentle marriage-rites  
 Thy care ; the labors of the battle-field  
 Pertain to Pallas and the fiery Mars.”

Thus with each other talked the gods, while still

The great in battle, Diomed, pursued 535  
 Æneas, though he knew that Phœbus stretched  
 His arm to guard the warrior. Small regard  
 Had he for the great god, and much he longed  
 To strike Æneas down and bear away  
 The glorious arms he wore ; and thrice he rushed 540  
 To slay the Trojan, thrice Apollo smote  
 Upon his glittering shield. But when he made  
 The fourth assault, as if he were a god,  
 The archer of the skies, Apollo, thus  
 With menacing words rebuked him : “ Diomed, 545  
 Beware ; desist, nor think to make thyself  
 The equal of a god. The deathless race  
 Of gods is not as those who walk the earth.”

He spake ; the son of Tydeus, shrinking back,  
 Gave way before the anger of the god 550  
 Who sends his shafts afar. Then Phœbus bore  
 Æneas from the tumult to the height  
 Of sacred Pergamus, where stands his fane ;  
 And there Latona and the archer-queen,  
 Diana, in the temple's deep recess, 555  
 Tended him and brought back his glorious strength.  
 Meantime the bowyer-god, Apollo, formed  
 An image of Æneas, armed like him,  
 Round which the Trojans and Achaians thronged  
 With many a heavy weapon-stroke that fell 560  
 Upon the huge orbs of their ox-hide shields  
 And lighter bucklers. Now to fiery Mars  
 Apollo spake : “ Mars, Mars, thou plaguc of men,

Thou steeped in blood, destroyer of walled towns!  
Wilt thou not force this man to leave the field? 565  
Wilt thou not meet in arms this daring son  
Of Tydeus, who would even fight with Jove?  
Already has he wounded, in close fight,  
The goddess Venus at the wrist, and since  
Assaulted me as if he were a god." 570

He said, and on the heights of Pergamus  
Sat down, while the destroyer Mars went forth  
Among the embattled Trojan ranks, to rouse  
Their valor. In the form of Acamus,  
The gallant Thracian leader, he bespake 575  
The sons of Jove-descended Priam thus : —

“ O sons of Priam, him who claims descent  
From Jupiter ! how long will ye submit  
To see your people slaughtered by the Greeks ?  
Is it until the battle-storm shall reach 580  
Your city's stately portals ? Even now  
A hero whom we honor equally  
With the great Hector, our Æneas, son  
Of the large-souled Anchises, is struck down.  
Haste, let us rescue our beloved friend.” 585

He spake, and into every heart his words  
Carried new strength and courage. In that hour  
Sarpedon chid the noble Hector thus : —

“ Where is the prowess, Hector, which was thine  
So lately ? Thou hast said that thou alone, 590  
Thy kindred and thy brothers, could defend  
The city, without armies or allies.

Now I see none of these ; they all, like hounds  
Before a lion, crouch and slink away,  
While the confederates bear the brunt of war. 595  
I am but an auxiliar come from far,  
From Lycia, where the eddying Xanthus runs.  
There left I a beloved wife, and there  
An infant child, and large possessions, such  
As poor men covet. Yet do I exhort 600  
My Lycians to the combat, and myself  
Would willingly engage this foe of Troy,  
Although I here have nothing which the Greeks  
Might bear or drive away. Thou standest still,  
Meanwhile, nor dost thou bid the rest to keep 605  
Their ground and bear the battle for their wives.  
Yet have a care, lest, as if caught at length  
In the strong meshes of a mighty net,  
Ye find yourselves the captives and the prey  
Of enemies, who quickly will destroy 610  
Your nobly-peopled city. These are thoughts  
That should engage thy mind by night and day,  
And thou shouldst beg the chiefs of thine allies,  
Called to thy aid from far, that manfully  
They meet the foe, and foil his fierce attack, 615  
And take the cause of this reproach away."

Sarpedon spake ; and Hector, all in arms,  
Stung by his words, and leaping from his car,  
Brandished his spears, and went among the hosts  
And rallied them to battle. Terrible 620  
The conflict that ensued. The men of Troy

Made head against the Greeks : the Greeks stood  
firm,

Nor ever thought of flight. As when the wind  
Strews chaff about the sacred threshing-floors  
While wheat is winnowed, and before the breeze 625  
The yellow Ceres separates the grain  
From its light husk, which gathers in white heaps, —  
Even so the Greeks were whitened o'er with dust  
Raised in that tumult by the horses' hoofs  
And rising to the brazen firmament, 630  
As toward the fight the charioteers again  
Urged on their coursers. Yet the Greeks withstood  
The onset, and struck forward with strong arms.  
Meantime the furious Mars involved the field  
In darkness, to befriend the sons of Troy, 635  
And went through all the ranks, and well fulfilled  
The mandate which Apollo gave the god  
Who wields the golden falchion, bidding him  
Kindle the courage of the Trojan host  
Whene'er he saw the auxiliar of the Greeks, 640  
Minerva, leave the combat. Then the god  
Brought from the sanctuary's inner shrine  
Æneas, — filling with recovered strength  
That shepherd of the people. He beside  
His comrades placed himself, and they rejoiced 645  
To see him living and unharmed and strong  
As ever ; yet they questioned not ; their task  
Was different, set them by the god who bears  
The silver bow, and Mars the slayer of men,

And raging Strife that never is appeased. 650

The Ajaces and Ulysses and the son  
Of Tydeus roused the Achaians to the fight.  
For of the strength and clamor of the foe  
They felt no fear, but calmly stood, to bide  
The assault ; as stand in air the quiet clouds 655  
Which Saturn's son upon the mountain-tops  
Piles in still volumes when the north wind sleeps,  
And every ruder breath of blustering air  
That drives the gathered vapors through the sky.  
Thus calmly waited they the Trojan host, 660  
Nor thought of flight. And now Atrides passed  
In haste along their ranks, and gave command : —

“ O friends, be men, and let your hearts be strong,  
And let no warrior in the heat of fight  
Do what may bring him shame in others' eyes ; 665  
For more of those who shrink from shame are safe  
Than fall in battle, while with those who flee  
Is neither glory nor reprieve from death.”

So spake the king, and hurled his spear and smote  
Deïcoön, the son of Pergasis, 670  
A chief, and a companion in the war  
Of the great-souled Æneas. He in Troy  
Was honored as men honored Priam's sons,  
For he was ever foremost in the fight. 674  
The weapon struck his shield, yet stopped not there,  
But, breaking through its folds and through the belt,  
Transfixed the part beneath. The Trojan fell  
To earth, his armor clashing with his fall.

Æneas slew the sons of Diocles, —  
Orsilochus and Crethon, eminent Greeks. 680  
Their father dwelt in Pheræ nobly built,  
Amid his riches. From Alpheius he  
Derived his race, — a river whose long stream  
Flows through the meadows of the Pylian land.  
Orsilochus was to Alpheius born, 685  
Lord over many men, and he became  
The father of great Diocles, to whom  
Twin sons were born, well trained in all the arts  
Of warfare, — Crethon and Orsilochus.  
These, in the prime of youth, with their black ships  
Followed the Argives to the coast of Troy 691  
Famed for its generous steeds. They left their home  
To vindicate the honor of the sons  
Of Atreus, — Agamemnon, king of men,  
And Menelaus, — but they found their death. 695  
As two young lions, nourished by their dam  
Amid the thickets of some mighty wood,  
Seizing the beeves and fattened sheep, lay waste  
The stables, till at length themselves are slain  
By trenchant weapons in the shepherd's hand, 700  
So by the weapons of Æneas died  
These twain ; they fell as lofty fir-trees fall.  
But now, when Menelaus saw their fate,  
The mighty warrior, deeply sorrowing, rushed  
Among the foremost, armed in glittering brass, 705  
And brandishing his spear ; for Mars had roused  
His soul to fury, trusting he would meet

Æneas, and would perish by his hand.  
Antilochus, the generous Nestor's son,  
Came also to the van, for anxiously 710  
He feared mischance might overtake the king,  
To make the toils of their long warfare vain ;  
And there he found the combatants prepared  
For battle, with their trusty spears in hand,  
And standing face to face. At once he took 715  
His stand beside the monarch of the Greeks.  
At sight of the two warriors side by side,  
All valiant as he was, Æneas shunned  
The encounter. They, when they had drawn the dead  
Among the Grecian ranks, and to their friends 720  
Given up the hapless brothers, turned to take  
Their place among the foremost in the fight.  
Then, too, Pylæmenes, a chief like Mars,  
And leader of the Paphlagonian host, —  
A valiant squadron armed with shields, — was slain.  
Atrides Menelaus, skilled to wield 725  
The javelin, gave his death-wound. He transfixed  
The shoulder at the collar-bone. Meanwhile  
Antilochus against his charioteer,  
Mydon, the brave son of Atymnias, hurled 730  
A stone that smote his elbow as he wheeled  
His firm-paced steeds in flight. He dropped the  
reins,  
Gleaming with ivory as they trailed in dust.  
Antilochus leaped forward, smiting him  
Upon the temples with his sword. He fell 735

Gasping amidst the sand, his head immersed  
Up to his shoulders, — for the sand was deep, —  
And there remained till he was beaten down  
Before the horses' hoofs. Antilochus,  
Lashing the horses, drave them to the Greeks. 740

Hector beheld, and, springing with loud shouts,  
Stood mid the wavering ranks. The phalanxes  
Of the brave Trojans followed him, for Mars  
And terrible Bellona led them on, —  
Bellona bringing Tumult in her train, 745  
And Mars with brandished lance — a mighty  
weight —

Now stalking after Hector, now before.

Him when the valiant Diomed beheld,  
He trembled ; and, as one who, journeying  
Along a way he knows not, having crossed 750  
A place of drear extent, before him sees  
A river rushing swiftly toward the deep,  
And all its tossing current white with foam,  
And stops and turns, and measures back his way,  
So then did Diomed withdraw, and spake : — 755

“ O friends, how greatly must we all admire  
This noble Hector, mighty with the spear  
And terrible in war. There is some god  
Forever near him, warding off the stroke  
Of death ; beside him yonder even now 760  
Stands Mars in semblance of a mortal man.  
Yield, then, and with your faces toward the foe  
Fall back, and strive not with the gods of heaven.”

Even as he spake, the Trojan host drew near,  
And Hector slew two warriors trained to arms, —  
Menesthes and Anchialus, — who came 766  
Both in one chariot to the war. Their fall  
Ajax, the son of Telamon, beheld,  
And pitied, and drew near, and stood, and hurled  
His glittering spear. It smote Ampheius, son 770  
Of Selagus, who, rich in lands and goods,  
Abode in Pæsus. In an evil hour  
He joined the cause of Priam and his sons.  
Him at the belt the spear of Ajax smote,  
And pierced the bowels. With a crash he fell. 775  
Then hastened mighty Ajax to strip off  
The armor, but the Trojans at him cast  
Their pointed spears that glittered as they flew,  
And many struck his shield. He pressed his heel  
Against the slain, and from the body drew 780  
His brazen spear, but could not from the breast  
Loose the bright mail, so thick the weapons came,  
And such the wary dread with which he saw  
The bravest of the Trojans closing round, 784  
Many and fierce, and all with spears outstretched ;  
And he, though strong and valiant and renowned,  
Driven from the ground, gave way to mightier force.  
So toiled the warriors through that stubborn fight,  
When cruel fate urged on Tlepolemus,  
The great and valiant son of Hercules, 790  
To meet Sarpedon, mighty as a god.  
And now as each to each advanced, — the son

And grandson of the cloud-compeller Jove, —  
Thus first Tlepolemus addressed his foe : —

“ Sarpedon, Lycian monarch, what has brought 795  
Thee hither, trembling thus, and inexpert  
In battle? Lying flatterers are they  
That call thee son of Jupiter who bears  
The ægis ; for unlike the heroes thou,  
Born to the Thunderer in times of old, 800  
Nor like my daring father, Hercules  
The lion-hearted, who once came to Troy  
To claim the coursers of Laomedon.  
With but six ships, and warriors but a few,  
He laid the city waste and made its streets 805  
A desolation. Thou art weak of heart,  
And round thee are thy people perishing ;  
Yet, even wert thou brave, thy presence here  
From Lycia’s coast would prove of small avail  
To Troy ; for, slain in combat here by me, 810  
Thou to the gates of Hades shalt go down.”

Sarpedon, leader of the Lycians, thus  
Made answer : “ True it is, Tlepolemus,  
That he laid waste the sacred city of Troy  
For the base dealings of Laomedon, 815  
The monarch who with railing words repaid  
His great deservings, and kept back the steeds  
For which he came so far. But thou — thy fate  
Is slaughter and black death from this my spear ;  
And fame will come to me, and one more soul 820  
Go down to Hades.” As Sarpedon spake,

Tlepolemus upraised his ashen spear,  
And from the hands of both the chiefs at once  
Their massive weapons flew. Sarpedon smote  
Full in the throat his foe ; the cruel point 825  
Passed through the neck, and night came o'er his  
eyes.

Tlepolemus, in turn, on the left thigh  
Had struck Sarpedon with his ponderous lance.  
The weapon, cast with vigorous hand and arm,  
Pierced deep, and touched the bone ; but Jupiter 850  
Averted from his son the doom of death.

His noble comrades raised and bore away  
The great Sarpedon from the battle-field,  
Trailing the long spear with them. Bitter pain  
It gave him ; in their haste they marked it not, 835  
Nor thought to draw the ashen weapon forth,  
That he might mount the car ; so eagerly  
His anxious bearers hurried from the war.

On the other side the well-armed Greeks took up  
The slain Tlepolemus, to bear him thence. 840  
The great Ulysses, large of soul, beheld,  
And felt his spirit moved, as anxiously  
He pondered whether to pursue the son  
Of Jove the Thunderer, or turn and take  
The life of many a Lycian. Yet to slay 845  
Jove's mighty son was not his destiny,  
And therefore Pallas moved him to engage  
The crowd of Lycian warriors. Then he slew  
Coëranus and Alastor, Chromius,

Alcander, Halius, and Prytanis

850

Noëmon ; and yet more the noble Greek  
Had slain, if crested Hector, mighty chief,  
Had not perceived the havoc and, arrayed  
In shining armor, hurried to the van  
Of battle, carrying terror to the hearts  
Of the Achaïans. As he saw him near,  
Sarpedon was rejoiced, yet sadly said :—

855

“ O son of Priam, leave me not a prey  
To these Achaïans. Aid me, let me breathe  
My latest breath in Troy, since I no more  
Can hope, returning to my native land,  
To gladden my dear wife and little son.”

860

He spake, and crested Hector answered not,  
Still pressing forward, eager to drive back  
The Greeks in quick retreat, and take the life  
Of many a foe. Then did the noble band  
Who bore the great Sarpedon lay him down  
Beneath a shapely beech, a tree of Jove  
The Ægis-bearer. There stout Pelagon,  
His well-beloved comrade, from his thigh  
Drew forth the sharp blade of the ashen spear.  
Then the breath left him, and his eyes were closed  
In darkness ; but the light came back again  
As, breathing over him, the fresh north wind  
Revived the spirit in his laboring breast.

865

870

875

But not for Mars nor Hector mailed in brass  
Fled the Achaïans to their fleet ; nor yet  
Advanced they on the foe, but step by step

Gave way before him, for they had perceived  
The god of war was with the sons of Troy. 880

Whom first, whom last did Hector, Priam's son,  
And iron Mars lay low? The godlike chief  
Teuthras, and — great among the Grecian knights—  
Orestes, and the Ætolian Trechus, famed  
As spearman, and CEnomaus, and the son  
Of CEnops, Helemes, and after these  
Belted Oresbius, who in Hyla made  
His home, intent on gathering wealth beside  
The Lake Cephissus, on whose borders dwelt  
Bœotians many, lords of fertile lands. 890

The white-armed goddess Juno, when she saw  
The Argives falling in that cruel fray,  
Addressed Minerva with these wingèd words :—

“O thou unconquerable goddess, born  
To Jove the Ægis-bearer! what is this? 895  
It was an idle promise that we made  
To Menelaus, that he should behold  
Troy, with its strong defences, overthrown,  
And reach his home again, if thus we leave  
Mars the destroyer to his ravages. 900  
Come, let us bring our friends effectual aid.”

So spake she, and her bidding was obeyed  
By blue-eyed Pallas. Juno the august,  
Daughter of mighty Saturn, laid in haste  
The harness, with its ornaments of gold, 905  
Upon the horses. Hebe rolled the wheels,  
Each with eight spokes, and joined them to the ends

Of the steel axle, — fellies wrought of gold,  
 Bound with a brazen rim to last for aye, —  
 A wonder to behold. The hollow naves 920  
 Were silver, and on gold and silver cords  
 Was slung the chariot's seat ; in silver hooks  
 Rested the reins, and silver was the pole  
 Where the fair yoke and poitreles, all of gold,  
 Were fastened. Juno, eager for the strife, 925  
 Led the swift-footed steeds beneath the yoke.

Then Pallas, daughter of the god who bears  
 The ægis, on her father's palace-floor  
 Let fall in dainty folds her flowing robe  
 Of many colors, wrought by her own hand, 930  
 And, putting on the mail of Jupiter  
 The Cloud-compeller, stood arrayed in arms  
 For the stern tasks of war. Her shoulder bore  
 The dreadful ægis with its shaggy brim  
 Bordered with Terror. There was Strife, and there  
 Was Fortitude, and there was fierce Pursuit, 935  
 And there the Gorgon's head, a ghastly sight,  
 Deformed and dreadful, and a sign of woe  
 When borne by Jupiter. Upon her head  
 She placed a golden helmet with four crests 940  
 And fair embossed, of strength that might withstand  
 The armed battalions of a hundred towns ;  
 Then stepped into her shining car, and took  
 Her massive spear in hand, heavy and huge,  
 With which whole ranks of heroes are o'erthrown 945  
 Before the daughter of the Mighty One

Incensed against them. Juno swung the lash  
And swiftly urged the steeds. Before their way,  
On sounding hinges, of their own accord,  
Flew wide the gates of heaven, which evermore 940  
The Hours are watching, — they who keep the mount  
Olympus and the mighty heaven, with power  
To open or to close their cloudy veil.  
Thus through the gates they drave the obedient  
steeds,

And found Saturnius, where he sat apart 945  
From other gods, upon the loftiest height  
Of many-peaked Olympus. Juno there,  
The white-armed goddess, stayed her chariot-wheels,  
And, thus accosting Jove, she questioned him : —

“ O Father Jupiter, does not thy wrath 950  
Rise at those violent deeds of Mars ? Thou seest  
How many of the Achaians he has slain,  
And what brave men. Nay, thus it should not be.  
Great grief is mine ; but Venus and the god  
Phœbus, who bears the silver bow, rejoice 955  
To see this lawless maniac range the field,  
And urge him on. O Father Jupiter,  
Wilt thou be angry with me if I drive  
Mars, sorely wounded, from the battle-field ? ”

The cloud-compelling Jupiter replied : — 960  
“ Thou hast my leave ; but send to encounter him  
Pallas the spoiler, who has many a time  
Brought grievous troubles on the god of war.”

He spake, and white-armed Juno instantly

Obeded him. With the scourges she lashed the steeds,  
 And not unwillingly they flew between 966  
 Earth and the starry heaven. As much of space  
 As one who gazes on the dark-blue deep  
 Sees from the headland summit where he sits —  
 Such space the coursers of immortal breed 970  
 Cleared at each bound they made with sounding  
                   hoofs ;

And when they came to Ilium and its streams,  
 Where Simois and Scamander's channels meet,  
 The white-armed goddess Juno stayed their speed,  
 And loosed them from the yoke, and covered them  
 With darkness. Simois ministered, meanwhile, 976  
 The ambrosial pasturage on which they fed.

On went the goddesses, with step as light  
 As timid doves, and hastened toward the field  
 To aid the Achaian army. When they came 980  
 Where fought the bravest warriors in a throng  
 Around the great horse-tamer Diomed,  
 Like ravenous lions or wild boars whose rage  
 Is terrible, the white-armed goddess stood,  
 And called aloud, — for now she wore the form 985  
 Of gallant Stentor, in whose brazen voice  
 Was heard a shout like that of fifty men : —

“Shame on you, Argives, — wretches, who in form,  
 And form alone, are heroes. While we yet  
 Had great Achilles in the war, the men 990  
 Of Ilium dared not pass beyond their gates,  
 So much they feared his mighty spear ; but now

They push the battle to our hollow ships,  
Far from the town." As thus the goddess spake,  
New strength and courage woke in every breast. 995

Then blue-eyed Pallas hastened to the son  
Of Tydeus. By his steeds she found the king,  
And by his chariot, as he cooled the wound  
Made by the shaft of Pandarus. The sweat  
Beneath the ample band of his round shield 1005  
Had weakened him, and weary was his arm.  
He raised the band, and from the wounded limb  
Wiped off the clotted blood. The goddess laid  
Her hand upon the chariot-yoke, and said :—

"Tydeus hath left a son unlike himself ; 1005  
For he, though low in stature, was most brave ;  
And when he went, an envoy and alone,  
To Thebes, the populous Cadmean town,  
And I, enjoining him to keep aloof  
From wars and rash encounters, bade him sit 1010  
Quietly at the feasts in palace-halls,  
Still, to his valiant temper true, he gave  
Challenges to the Theban youths, and won  
The prize with ease in all their games, such aid  
I gave him. Now I stand by thee in turn, 1015  
Protect thee, and exhort thee manfully  
To fight against the Trojans ; but to-day  
Either the weariness of toil unnerves  
Thy frame, or withering fear besets thy heart.  
Henceforth we cannot deem thee, as of late, 1020  
The offspring of CEnides skilled in war."

And then the valiant Diomed replied : —

“ I know thee, goddess, daughter of great Jove  
The Ægis-bearer ; therefore will I speak  
Freely and keep back nothing. No base fear 1025  
Unmans me, nor desire of ease ; but well  
I bear in mind the mandate thou hast given.  
Thou didst forbid me to contend with gods,  
Except that if Jove’s daughter, Venus, joined  
The battle, I might wound her with my spear. 1030  
But now I have withdrawn, and given command  
That all the Greeks come hither ; for I see  
That Mars is in the field and leads the war.”

Again the blue-eyed Pallas, answering, said : —

“ Tydides Diomed, most dear of men, 1035  
Nay, fear thou nothing from this Mars, nor yet  
From any other of the gods ; for I  
Will be thy sure defence. First urge thy course  
Full against Mars, with thy firm-footed steeds.  
Engage him hand to hand ; respect him not, — 1040  
The fiery, frantic Mars, the unnatural plague  
Of man, the fickle god, who promised me  
And Juno, lately, to take part with us  
Against the Trojans and befriend the Greeks.  
Now he forgets, and joins the sons of Troy.” 1045

She spake, and laid her hand on Sthenelus,  
To draw him from the horses ; instantly  
He leaped to earth ; the indignant deity  
Took by the side of Diomed her place ;  
The beechen axle groaned beneath the weight 1050

Of that great goddess and that man of might.  
Then Pallas seized the lash and caught the reins,  
And, urging the firm-footed coursers, drave  
Full against Mars, who at that moment slew  
Huge Periphas, the mightiest one of all 1055  
The Ætolian band, — Ochesius' famous son.  
While bloody-handed Mars was busy yet  
About the slain, Minerva hid her face  
In Pluto's helmet, that the god might fail  
To see her. As that curse of humankind 1060  
Beheld the approach of noble Diomed,  
He left the corpse of Periphas unspoiled  
Where he had fallen, and where he breathed his  
last,  
And came in haste to meet the Grecian knight.  
And now, when they were near, and face to face, 1065  
Mars o'er the chariot-yoke and horses' reins  
First hurled his brazen spear, in hope to take  
His enemy's life ; but Pallas with her hand  
Caught it and turned it, so that it flew by  
And gave no wound. The valiant Diomed 1070  
Made with his brazen spear the next assault,  
And Pallas guided it to strike the waist  
Where girded by the baldric. In that part  
She wounded Mars, and tore the shining skin,  
And drew the weapon back. The furious god 1075  
Uttered a cry as of nine thousand men,  
Or of ten thousand, rushing to the fight.  
The Greeks and Trojans stood aghast with fear,

To hear that terrible cry of him whose thirst  
Of bloodshed never is appeased by blood. 1080

As when, in time of heat, the air is filled  
With a black shadow from the gathering clouds  
And the strong-blowing wind, so furious Mars  
Appeared to Diomed, as in a cloud  
He rose to the broad heaven and to the home 1085  
Of gods on high Olympus. Near to Jove  
He took his seat in bitter grief, and showed  
The immortal blood still dropping from his wound,  
And thus, with wingèd words, complaining said :—

“ O Father Jupiter ! does not thy wrath 1090  
Rise at these violent deeds ? ’T is ever thus  
That we, the gods, must suffer grievously  
From our own rivalry in favoring man ;  
And yet the blame of all this strife is thine,  
For thou hast a mad daughter, ever wrong, 1095  
And ever bent on mischief. All the rest  
Of the immortals dwelling on this mount  
Obey thee and are subject to thy will.  
Her only thou hast never yet restrained  
By word or act, but dost indulge her freaks 1100  
Because the pestilent creature is thy child.  
And now she moves the insolent Diomed  
To raise his hand against the immortal gods.  
And first he wounded Venus in the wrist,  
Contending hand to hand ; and then he sought 1105  
To encounter me in arms, as if he were  
The equal of a god. My own swift feet

Carried me thence, else might I long have lain,  
In anguish, under heaps of carcasses,  
Or helplessly been mangled by his sword." 1110

The Cloud-compeller, Jove, replied, and frowned :  
" Come not to me, thou changeling, to complain.  
Of all the gods upon the Olympian mount  
I like thee least, who ever dost delight  
In broils and wars and battles. Thou art like 1115  
Thy mother Juno, headstrong and perverse.  
Her I can scarcely rule by strict commands,  
And what thou sufferest now, I deem, is due  
To her bad counsels. Yet 't is not my will  
That thou shouldst suffer longer, who dost share 1120  
My lineage, whom thy mother bore to me.  
But wert thou born, destroyer as thou art,  
To any other god, thou hadst long since  
Lain lower than the sons of Uranus."

So spake he, and to Pæon gave command 1125  
To heal the wound ; and Pæon bathed the part  
With pain-dispelling balsams, and it healed ;  
For Mars was not to die. As, when the juice  
Of figs is mingled with white milk and stirred,  
The liquid gathers into clots while yet 1130  
It whirls with the swift motion, so was healed  
The wound of violent Mars. Then Hebe bathed  
The god, and robed him richly, and he took  
His seat, delighted, by Saturnian Jove.

Now, having forced the curse of nations, Mars, 1135  
To pause from slaughter, Argive Juno came,

With Pallas, her invincible ally,  
Back to the mansion of imperial Jove.

## BOOK VI.

NOW from that stubborn conflict of the Greeks  
And Trojans had the gods withdrawn. The  
fight

Of men encountering men with brazen spears  
Still raged from place to place upon the plain  
Between the Xanthus and the Simoïs. 5

And first of all did Ajax Telamon,  
The bulwark of the Achaians, break the ranks  
Of Troy and raise the hopes of those who fought  
Beside him ; for he smote the bravest man  
Of all the Thracian warriors, — Acamas, 10  
Son of Eussorus, strong and large of limb.  
His spear-head, through the plumed helmet's cone  
Entering the forehead of the Thracian, pierced  
The bone, and darkness gathered o'er his eyes.  
The valiant Diomed slew Axylus, 15  
The son of Teuthras. To the war he came  
From nobly-built Arisba ; great his wealth,  
And greatly was he loved, for courteously  
He welcomed to his house beside the way  
All comers. None of these could interpose 20  
Between him and his death, for Diomed

Slew him and his attendant charioteer,  
Calysius ; both went down below the earth.

And then Euryalus struck Dresus down,  
And smote Opheltius, and went on to slay 25  
Æsepus and his brother Pedasus ;—

A river-nymph, Abarbareia, bore  
Both children to Bucolion the renowned.

Bucolion was the eldest of the sons  
Of great Laomedon. His mother reared 30  
The boy in secret. While he fed his sheep,

He with the river-nymph was joined in love  
And marriage, and she bore him twins ; and these,  
Brave and of shapely limb, Mecisteus' son  
Struck down, and from their shoulders tore the mail.

The warlike Polypoetes overthrew 36

Astyalus ; Ulysses smote to earth  
Pidytes the Percosian with the spear,  
And Teucer Aretaon, nobly born.

The glittering javelin of Antilochus, 40

The son of Nestor, laid Ablerus low ;  
And Agamemnon, king of men, struck down  
Elatus, who on lofty Pedasus

Dwelt, by the smoothly flowing Satnio's stream.  
Brave Leitus slew Phylacus in flight, 45

And by Eurypylus Melanthius fell.

Then valiant Menelaus took alive  
Adrastus, whose two coursers, as they scoured  
The plain in terror, struck against a branch  
Of tamarisk, and, there entangled, snapped 50

The chariot pole, and, breaking from it, fled  
 Whither were others fleeing. From the car  
 Adrastus to the dust beside the wheel  
 Fell, on his face. There, lifting his huge spear,  
 Atrides Menelaus o'er him stood. 55

Adrastus clasped the warrior's knees and said :—

“O son of Atreus, take me prisoner,  
 And thou shalt have large ransom. In the house  
 Of my rich father ample treasures lie, —  
 Brass, gold, and tempered steel, — and he shall send  
 Gifts without end when he shall hear that I 61  
 Am spared alive and in the Grecian fleet.”

He spake, and moved the conqueror, who now  
 Was minded to give charge that one among  
 His comrades to the Grecian fleet should lead 65  
 The captive. Agamemnon came in haste,  
 And, lifting up his voice, rebuked him thus :—

“O Menelaus, soft of heart, why thus  
 Art thou concerned for men like these? In sooth,  
 Great are the benefits thy household owes 70  
 The Trojans. Nay, let none of them escape  
 The doom of swift destruction by our hands.  
 The very babe within his mother's womb,  
 Even that must die, and all of Ilium born  
 Perish unburied, utterly cut off.” 75

He spake ; the timely admonition changed  
 The purpose of his brother, who thrust back  
 The suppliant hero with his hand ; and then  
 King Agamemnon smote him through the loins,

And prone on earth he fell. Upon the breast 80  
Of the slain man Atrides placed his heel,  
And from the body drew the ashen spear.

Then Nestor to the Argives called aloud : —  
“ Friends, Grecian heroes, ministers of Mars !  
Let no man here through eagerness for spoil 85  
Linger behind the rest, that he may bear  
Much plunder to the ships ; but let us first  
Strike down our enemies, and afterward  
At leisure strip the bodies of the dead.”

Thus speaking, he revived in every breast 90  
Courage and zeal. Then had the men of Troy  
Sought refuge from the Greeks within their walls,  
O’ercome by abject fear, if Helenus,  
The son of Priam, and of highest note  
Among the augurs, had not made his way 95  
To Hector and Æneas, speaking thus : —

“ O Hector and Æneas, since on you  
Is laid the mighty labor to command  
The Trojans and the Lycians, — for the first  
Are ye in battle, and in council first, — 100  
Here make your stand, and haste from side to side,  
Rallying your scattered ranks, lest they betake  
Themselves to flight, and, rushing to their wives,  
Become the scorn and laughter of the foe.  
And then, so soon as ye shall have revived 105  
The courage of your men, we here will bide  
The conflict with the Greeks, though closely pressed ;  
For so we must. But, Hector, thou depart

To Troy and seek the mother of us both,  
And bid her call the honored Trojan dames 110  
To where the blue-eyed Pallas has her fane,  
In the high citadel, and with a key  
Open the hallowed doors, and let her bring  
What she shall deem the fairest of the robes,  
And amplest, in her palace, and the one 115  
She prizes most, and lay it on the knees  
Of the bright-haired Minerva. Let her make  
A vow to offer to the goddess there  
Twelve yearling heifers that have never borne  
The yoke, if she in mercy will regard 120  
The city, and the wives and little ones  
Of its defenders ; if she will protect  
Our sacred Ilium from the ruthless son  
Of Tydeus, from whose valor armies flee,  
And whom I deem the bravest of the Greeks. 125  
For not so greatly have we held in dread  
Achilles, the great leader, whom they call  
The goddess-born ; but terrible in wrath  
Is Diomed, nor hath his peer in might."

He spake, and Hector of his brother's words 130  
Was not unmindful. Instantly he leaped,  
Armed, from his chariot, shaking his sharp spears ;  
And everywhere among the host he went,  
Exhorting them to combat manfully ;  
And thus he kindled the fierce fight anew. 135  
They, turning from the flight, withstood the Greeks.  
The Greeks fell back and ceased to slay ; they  
thought

That one of the immortals had come down  
From out the starry heaven to help the men  
Of Troy, so suddenly they turned and fought. 140  
Then Hector to the Trojans called aloud : —

“ O valiant sons of Troy, and ye allies  
Summoned from far ! Be men, my friends ; call back  
Your wonted valor, while I go to Troy  
To ask the aged men, our counsellors, 145  
And all our wives, to come before the gods  
And pray and offer vows of sacrifice.”

So the plumed Hector spake, and then withdrew,  
While the black fell that edged his bossy shield  
Struck on his neck and ankles as he went. 150

Now came into the midst between the hosts  
Glaucus, the offspring of Hippolochus,  
And met the son of Tydeus, — both intent  
On combat. But when now the twain were near,  
And ready to engage, brave Diomed 155  
Spake first, and thus addressed his enemy : —

“ Who mayst thou be, of mortal men ? Most brave  
Art thou, yet never in the glorious fight  
Have I beheld thee. Thou surpassest now  
All others in thy daring, since thou com'st 160  
Within the reach of my long spear. The sons  
Of most unhappy men are they who meet  
My arm ; but — if thou comest from above,  
A god — I war not with the gods of heaven ;  
For even brave Lycurgus lived not long, 165  
The son of Dryas, who engaged in strife

With the celestial gods. He once pursued  
 The nurses of the frantic Bacchus through  
 The hallowed ground of Nyssa. All at once  
 They flung to earth their sacred implements, 170  
 Lycurgus the man-slayer beating them  
 With an ox-driver's goad. Then Bacchus fled  
 And plunged into the sea, where Thetis hid  
 The trembler in her bosom, for he shook  
 With panic at the hero's angry threats. 175  
 Thenceforward were the blessed deities  
 Wroth with Lycurgus. Him did Saturn's son  
 Strike blind, and after that he lived not long,  
 For he was held in hate by all the gods.  
 So will I never with the gods contend. 180  
 But if thou be indeed of mortal race,  
 And nourished by the fruits of earth, draw near ;  
 And quickly shalt thou pass the gates of death."

Hippolochus's son, the far-renowned,  
 Made answer thus : " O large-souled Diomed, 185  
 Why ask my lineage ? Like the race of leaves  
 Is that of humankind. Upon the ground  
 The winds strew one year's leaves ; the sprouting  
 grove

Puts forth another brood, that shoot and grow  
 In the spring season. So it is with man : 190  
 One generation grows while one decays.  
 Yet since thou takest heed of things like these,  
 And askest whence I sprang, — although to most  
 My birth is not unknown, — there is a town

Lapped in the pasture-grounds where graze the  
steeds 195

Of Argos, Ephyra by name, and there  
Dwelt Sisypheus Æolides, most shrewd  
Of men ; his son was Glaucus, and the son  
Of Glaucus was the good Bellerophon,  
To whom the gods gave beauty and the grace 200  
Of winning manners. Prætus sought his death  
And banished him, for Prætus was the chief  
Among the Argives ; Jupiter had made  
That people subject to his rule. The wife  
Of Prætus, nobly-born Anteia, sought 205  
With passionate desire his secret love,  
But failed to entice, with all her blandishments,  
The virtuous and discreet Bellerophon.

Therefore went she to Prætus with a lie, —

“ ‘ Die, Prætus, thou, or put Bellerophon 210  
To death, for he has offered force to me.’

“The monarch hearkened, and was moved to  
wrath ;

And then he would not slay him, for his soul  
Revolted at the deed ; he sent him thence  
To Lycia, with a fatal tablet, sealed, 215  
With things of deadly import writ therein,  
Meant for Anteia’s father, in whose hand  
Bellerophon must place it, and be made  
To perish. So at Lycia he arrived  
Under the favoring guidance of the gods ; 220  
And when he came where Lycian Xanthus flows,

The king of that broad realm received his guest  
With hospitable welcome, feasting him  
Nine days, and offering up in sacrifice  
Nine oxen. But when rosy-fingered Morn 225  
Appeared for the tenth time, he questioned him  
And bade him show the token he had brought  
From Proetus. When the monarch had beheld  
The fatal tablet from his son-in-law,  
The first command he gave him was, to slay 230  
Heaven-born Chimæra, the invincible.  
No human form was hers : a lion she  
In front, a dragon in the hinder parts,  
And in the midst a goat, and terribly  
Her nostrils breathed a fierce, consuming flame ; 235  
Yet, trusting in the portents of the gods,  
He slew her. Then it was his second task  
To combat with the illustrious Solymi, —  
The hardest battle he had ever fought —  
So he declared — with men ; and then he slew —  
His third exploit — the man-like Amazons. 241  
Then he returned to Lycia ; on his way  
The monarch laid a treacherous snare. He chose  
From his wide Lycian realm the bravest men  
To lie in ambush for him. Never one 245  
Of these came home again, — Bellerophon  
The matchless slew them all. And when the king  
Saw that he was the offspring of a god,  
He kept him near him, giving him to wife  
His daughter, and dividing with him all 250

His kingly honors, while the Lycians set  
Their richest fields apart — a goodly spot,  
Ploughlands and vineyards — for the prince to till.  
And she who now became his wife brought forth  
Three children to the sage Bellerophon, — 255  
Isandrus and Hippolochus ; and, last,  
Laodameia, who in secret bore  
To all-providing Jupiter a son, —  
Godlike Sarpedon, eminent in arms.  
But when Bellerophon upon himself 260  
Had drawn the anger of the gods, he roamed  
The Alcian fields alone, a prey to thoughts  
That wasted him, and shunning every haunt  
Of humankind. The god whose lust of strife  
Is never sated, Mars, cut off his son 265  
Isandrus, warring with the illustrious race  
Of Solymi ; and Dian, she who guides  
Her car with golden reins, in anger slew  
His daughter. I am of Hippolochus ;  
From him I claim my birth. He sent me forth 270  
To Troy with many counsels and commands,  
Ever to bear myself like a brave man,  
And labor to excel, and never bring  
Dishonor on the stock from which I sprang, —  
The bravest stock by far in Ephyra 275  
And the wide realm of Lycia. 'T is my boast  
To be of such a race and such a blood."

He spake. The warlike Diomed was glad,  
And, planting in the foodful earth his spear,

Addressed the people's shepherd blandly thus :—

“ Most surely thou art my ancestral guest ;      281  
 For noble Ceneus once within his halls  
 Received the blameless chief Bellerophon,  
 And kept him twenty days, and they bestowed  
 Gifts on each other, such as host and guest      285  
 Exchange ; a purple baldric Ceneus gave  
 Of dazzling color, and Bellerophon  
 A double golden goblet ; this I left  
 Within my palace when I came to Troy.  
 Of Tydeus I remember nothing, since      290  
 He left me, yet a little child, and went  
 To Thebes, where perished such a host of Greeks.  
 Henceforward I will be thy host and friend  
 In Argos ; thou shalt be the same to me  
 In Lycia when I visit Lycia's towns ;      295  
 And let us in the tumult of the fray  
 Avoid each other's spears, for there will be  
 Of Trojans and of their renowned allies  
 Enough for me to slay whene'er a god  
 Shall bring them in my way. In turn for thee      300  
 Are many Greeks to smite whomever thou  
 Canst overcome. Let us exchange our arms,  
 That even these may see that thou and I  
 Regard each other as ancestral guests.”

Thus having said, and leaping from their cars,      305  
 They clasped each other's hands and pledged their  
 faith.

Then did the son of Saturn take away

The judging mind of Glaucus, when he gave  
His arms of gold away for arms of brass  
Worn by Tydides Diomed, — the worth 310  
Of fivescore oxen for the worth of nine.

And now had Hector reached the Scæan gates  
And beechen tree. Around him flocked the wives  
And daughters of the Trojans eagerly ;  
Tidings of sons and brothers they required, 315  
And friends and husbands. He admonished all  
Duly to importune the gods in prayer,  
For woe, he said, was near to many a one.

And then he came to Priam's noble hall, —  
A palace built with graceful porticos, 320  
And fifty chambers near each other, walled  
With polished stone, the rooms of Priam's sons  
And of their wives ; and opposite to these  
Twelve chambers for his daughters, also near  
Each other ; and, with polished marble walls, 325  
The sleeping-rooms of Priam's sons-in-law  
And their unblemished consorts. There he met  
His gentle mother on her way to seek  
Her fairest child, Laodice. She took 329  
His hand and held it fast, while thus she spake : —

“ Why art thou come, my child, and why hast left  
The raging fight ? Full hard these hateful Greeks  
Press us, in fighting round the city-walls.  
Thy heart, I know, hath moved thee to repair  
To our high citadel, and lift thy hands 335  
In prayer to Jupiter. But stay thou here

Till I bring pleasant wine, that thou mayst pour  
A part to Jove and to the other gods,  
And drink and be refreshed ; for wine restores  
Strength to the weary, and I know that thou 340  
Art weary, fighting for thy countrymen."

Great Hector of the crested helm replied : —  
" My honored mother, bring not pleasant wine,  
Lest that unman me, and my wonted might  
And valor leave me. I should fear to pour 345  
Dark wine to Jupiter with hands unwashed.  
Nor is it fitting that a man like me,  
Defiled with blood and battle-dust, should make  
Vows to the cloud-compeller, Saturn's son.  
But thou, with incense, seek the temple reared 350  
To Pallas the despoiler, — calling first  
Our honored dames together. Take with thee  
What thou shalt deem the fairest of the robes,  
And amplest, in thy palace, and the one  
Thou prizest most, and lay it on the knees 355  
Of the bright-haired Minerva. Make a vow  
To offer to the goddess in her fane  
Twelve yearling heifers that have never borne  
The yoke, if she in mercy will regard  
The city, and the wives and little ones 360  
Of its defenders ; if she will protect  
Our sacred Ilium from the ruthless son  
Of Tydeus, from whose valor armies flee.  
So to the shrine of Pallas, warrior-queen,  
Do thou repair, while I depart to seek 365

Paris, if he will listen to my voice.

Would that the earth might open where he stands,  
And swallow him ! Olympian Jupiter

Reared him to be the bane of all who dwell

In Troy, to large-souled Priam and his sons. 370

Could I behold him sinking to the shades,

My heart would lose its sense of bitter woe."

He spake. His mother, turning homeward, gave

Charge to her handmaids, who through all the town

Passed, summoning the matrons, while the queen 375

Descended to her chamber, where the air

Was sweet with perfumes, and in which were laid

Her rich embroidered robes, the handiwork

Of Sidon's damsels, whom her son had brought —

The godlike Alexander — from the coast 380

Of Sidon, when across the mighty deep

He sailed and brought the high-born Helen thence.

One robe, most beautiful of all, she chose,

To bring to Pallas, ampler than the rest,

And many-hued ; it glistened like a star, 385

And lay beneath them all. Then hastily

She left the chamber with the matron train.

They reached Minerva's temple, and its gates

Were opened by Theano, rosy-cheeked,

The knight Antenor's wife and Cisseus' child, 390

Made priestess to the goddess by the sons

Of Troy. Then all the matrons lifted up

Their voices and stretched forth their suppliant hands

To Pallas, while the fair Theano took

The robe and spread its folds upon the lap 395  
 Of fair-haired Pallas, and with solemn vows  
 Prayed to the daughter of imperial Jove : —

“ O venerated Pallas, Guardian-Power  
 Of Troy, great goddess ! shatter thou the lance  
 Of Diomed, and let him fall in death 400  
 Before the Scæan gates, that we forthwith  
 May offer to thee in thy temple here  
 Twelve yearling heifers that have never worn  
 The yoke, if thou wilt pity us and spare  
 The wives of Trojans and their little ones.” 405

So spake she, supplicating ; but her prayer  
 Minerva answered not ; and while they made  
 Vows to the daughter of Almighty Jove,  
 Hector was hastening to the sumptuous home  
 Of Alexander, which that prince had built 410  
 With aid of the most cunning architects  
 In Troy the fruitful, by whose hands were made  
 The bed-chamber and hall and ante-room.  
 There entered Hector, dear to Jove ; he bore  
 In hand a spear eleven cubits long : 415  
 The brazen spear-head glittered brightly, bound  
 With a gold circle. In his room he there  
 Found Paris, busied with his shining arms, —  
 Corselet and shield ; he tried his curvèd bow ;  
 While Argive Helen with the attendant maids 420  
 Was sitting, and appointed each a task.  
 Hector beheld, and chid him sharply thus : —  
 “ Strange man ! a fitting time indeed is this,

To indulge thy sullen humor, while in fight  
Around our lofty walls the men of Troy 425  
Are perishing, and for thy sake the war  
Is fiercely blazing all around our town.  
Thou wouldst thyself reprove him, shouldst thou see  
Another warrior as remiss as thou  
In time of battle. Rouse thee, then, and act, 430  
Lest we behold our city all in flames.”

Then answered Paris of the godlike form : —  
“Hector ! although thou justly chidest me,  
And not beyond my due, yet let me speak.  
Attend and hearken. Not in sullenness, 435  
Nor angry with the Trojans, sat I here  
Within my chamber, but that I might give  
A loose to sorrow. Even now my wife  
With gentle speeches has besought of me  
That I return to battle ; and to me 440  
That seems the best, for oft doth victory  
Change sides in war. Remain thou yet awhile,  
Till I put on my armor ; or go thou,  
And I shall follow and rejoin thee soon.”

He ended. Hector of the beamy helm 445  
Heard him, and answered not ; but Helen spake,  
And thus with soothing words addressed the chief : —

“Brother-in-law, — for such thou art, though I  
Am lost to shame, and cause of many ills, —  
Would that some violent blast when I was born 450  
Had whirled me to the mountain wilds, or waves  
Of the hoarse sea, that they might swallow me,

Ere deeds like these were done! But since the gods  
Have thus decreed, why was I not the wife  
Of one who bears a braver heart and feels 455  
Keenly the anger and reproach of men?  
For Paris hath not, and will never have,  
A resolute mind, and must abide the effect  
Of his own folly. Enter thou meanwhile,  
My brother ; seat thee here, for heavily 460  
Must press on thee the labors thou dost bear  
For one so vile as I, and for the sake  
Of guilty Paris. An unhappy lot,  
By Jupiter's appointment, waits us both, —  
A theme of song for men in time to come." 465

Great Hector of the beamy helm replied : —  
" Nay, Helen, ask me not to sit ; thy speech  
Is courteous, but persuades me not. My mind  
Is troubled for the Trojans, to whose aid  
I hasten, for they miss me even now. 470  
But thou exhort this man, and bid him haste  
To overtake me ere I leave the town.  
I go to my own mansion first, to meet  
My household, — my dear wife and little child ;  
Nor know I whether I may come once more 475  
To them, or whether the great gods ordain  
That I must perish by the hands of Greeks."

So spake the plumèd Hector, and withdrew,  
And reached his pleasant palace, but found not  
White-armed Andromache within, for she 480  
Was in the tower, beside her little son

And well-robed nurse, and sorrowed, shedding tears.  
And Hector, seeing that his blameless wife  
Was not within, came forth again, and stood  
Upon the threshold questioning the maids. 485

“ I pray you, damsels, tell me whither went  
White-armed Andromache ? Has she gone forth  
To seek my sisters, or those stately dames,  
My brothers’ wives ? Or haply has she sought  
The temple of Minerva, where are met 490  
The other bright-haired matrons of the town  
To supplicate the dreaded deity ? ”

Then said the diligent housewife in reply : —  
“ Since thou wilt have the truth, — thy wife is gone  
Not to thy sisters, nor those stately dames, 495  
Thy brothers’ wives ; nor went she forth to join  
The other bright-haired matrons of the town,  
Where in Minerva’s temple they are met  
To supplicate the dreaded deity  
But to the lofty tower of Troy she went 500  
When it was told her that the Trojan troops  
Lost heart, and that the valor of the Greeks  
Prevailed. She now is hurrying toward the walls,  
Like one distracted, with her son and nurse.”

So spake the matron. Hector left in haste 505  
The mansion, and retraced his way between  
The rows of stately dwellings, traversing  
The mighty city. When at length he reached  
The Scæan gates, that issue on the field,  
His spouse, the nobly-dowered Andromache. 510

Came forth to meet him, — daughter of the prince  
 Eëtion, who, among the woody slopes  
 Of Placos, in the Hypoplacian town  
 Of Thebè, ruled Cilicia and her sons,  
 And gave his child to Hector great in arms. 515

She came attended by a maid, who bore  
 A tender child — a babe too young to speak —  
 Upon her bosom, — Hector's only son,  
 Beautiful as a star, whom Hector called  
 Scamandrius, but all else Astyanax, — 520  
 The city's lord, — since Hector stood the sole  
 Defence of Troy. The father on his child  
 Looked with a silent smile. Andromache  
 Pressed to his side meanwhile, and, all in tears,  
 Clung to his hand, and, thus beginning, said : — 525

“ Too brave ! thy valor yet will cause thy death.  
 Thou hast no pity on thy tender child,  
 Nor me, unhappy one, who soon must be  
 Thy widow. All the Greeks will rush on thee  
 To take thy life. A happier lot were mine, 530  
 If I must lose thee, to go down to earth,  
 For I shall have no hope when thou art gone, —  
 Nothing but sorrow. Father have I none,  
 And no dear mother. Great Achilles slew  
 My father when he sacked the populous town 535  
 Of the Cilicians, — Thebè with high gates.  
 'T was there he smote Eëtion, yet forbore  
 To make his arms a spoil ; he dared not that,  
 But burned the dead with his bright armor on.

And raised a mound above him. Mountain-nymphs,  
Daughters of ægis-bearing Jupiter, 541  
Came to the spot and planted it with elms.  
Seven brothers had I in my father's house,  
And all went down to Hades in one day.  
Achilles the swift-footed slew them all 545  
Among their slow-paced bullocks and white sheep.  
My mother, princess on the woody slopes  
Of Placos, with his spoils he bore away,  
And only for large ransom gave her back.  
But her Diana, archer-queen, struck down 550  
Within her father's palace. Hector, thou  
Art father and dear mother now to me,  
And brother and my youthful spouse besides.  
In pity keep within the fortress here,  
Nor make thy child an orphan nor thy wife 555  
A widow. Post thine army near the place  
Of the wild fig-tree, where the city-walls  
Are low and may be scaled. Thrice in the war  
The boldest of the foe have tried the spot, —  
The Ajaces and the famed Idomeneus, 560  
The two chiefs born to Atreus, and the brave  
Tydides, whether counselled by some seer  
Or prompted to the attempt by their own minds."

Then answered Hector, great in war : " All this  
I bear in mind, dear wife ; but I should stand 565  
Ashamed before the men and long-robed dames  
Of Troy, were I to keep aloof and shun  
The conflict, coward-like. Not thus my heart

Prompts me, for greatly have I learned to dare  
And strike among the foremost sons of Troy, 570  
Upholding my great father's fame and mine ;  
Yet well in my undoubting mind I know  
The day shall come in which our sacred Troy,  
And Priam, and the people over whom  
Spear-bearing Priam rules, shall perish all. 575  
But not the sorrows of the Trojan race,  
Nor those of Hecuba herself, nor those  
Of royal Priam, nor the woes that wait  
My brothers many and brave, — who all at last,  
Slain by the pitiless foe, shall lie in dust, — 580  
Grieve me so much as thine, when some mailed Greek  
Shall lead thee weeping hence, and take from thee  
Thy day of freedom. Thou in Argos then  
Shalt, at another's bidding, ply the loom,  
And from the fountain of Messeis draw 585  
Water, or from the Hypereian spring,  
Constrained unwilling by thy cruel lot.  
And then shall some one say who sees thee weep,  
' This was the wife of Hector, most renowned  
Of the horse-taming Trojans, when they fought 590  
Around their city.' So shall some one say,  
And thou shalt grieve the more, lamenting him  
Who haply might have kept afar the day  
Of thy captivity. O, let the earth  
Be heaped above my head in death before 595  
I hear thy cries as thou art borne away ! "

So speaking, mighty Hector stretched his arms

To take the boy ; the boy shrank crying back  
To his fair nurse's bosom, scared to see  
His father helmeted in glittering brass, 600  
And eying with affright the horse-hair plume  
That grimly nodded from the lofty crest.  
At this both parents in their fondness laughed ;  
And hastily the mighty Hector took  
The helmet from his brow and laid it down 605  
Gleaming upon the ground, and, having kissed  
His darling son and tossed him up in play,  
Prayed thus to Jove and all the gods of heaven : —

“ O Jupiter and all ye deities,  
Vouchsafe that this my son may yet become 610  
Among the Trojans eminent like me,  
And nobly rule in Ilium. May they say,  
‘ This man is greater than his father was ! ’  
When they behold him from the battle-field  
Bring back the bloody spoil of the slain foe, — 615  
That so his mother may be glad at heart.”

So speaking, to the arms of his dear spouse  
He gave the boy ; she on her fragrant breast  
Received him, weeping as she smiled. The chief  
Beheld, and, moved with tender pity, smoothed 620  
Her forehead gently with his hand and said : —

“ Sorrow not thus, beloved one, for me.  
No living man can send me to the shades  
Before my time ; no man of woman born,  
Coward or brave, can shun his destiny. 625  
But go thou home, and tend thy labors there, —

The web, the distaff, — and command thy maids  
To speed the work. The cares of war pertain  
To all men born in Troy, and most to me."

Thus speaking, mighty Hector took again 630  
His helmet, shadowed with the horse-hair plume,  
While homeward his beloved consort went,  
Oft looking back, and shedding many tears.  
Soon was she in the spacious palace-halls  
Of the man-queller Hector. There she found 635  
A troop of maidens, — with them all she shared  
Her grief; and all in his own house bewailed  
The living Hector, whom they thought no more  
To see returning from the battle-field,  
Safe from the rage and weapons of the Greeks. 640

Nor waited Paris in his lofty halls,  
But when he had put on his glorious arms,  
Glittering with brass, he traversed with quick steps  
The city; and as when some courser, fed  
With barley in the stall, and wont to bathe 645  
In some smooth-flowing river, having snapped  
His halter, gayly scampers o'er the plain,  
And in the pride of beauty bears aloft  
His head, and gives his tossing mane to stream  
Upon his shoulders, while his flying feet 650  
Bear him to where the mares are wont to graze, —  
So came the son of Priam — Paris — down  
From lofty Pergamus in glittering arms,  
And, glorious as the sun, held on his way  
Exulting and with rapid feet. He found 655

His noble brother Hector as he turned  
 To leave the place in which his wife and he  
 Had talked together. Alexander then —  
 Of godlike form — addressed his brother thus : —

“ My elder brother ! I have kept thee here 660  
 Waiting, I fear, for me, though much in haste,  
 And came less quickly than thou didst desire.”

And Hector of the plumèd helm replied : —  
 “ Strange being, no man justly can dispraise 665  
 Thy martial deeds, for thou art truly brave.  
 But oft art thou remiss and wilt not join  
 The combat. I am sad at heart to hear  
 The Trojans — they who suffer for thy sake  
 A thousand hardships — speak so ill of thee.  
 Yet let us go : we will confer of this 670  
 Another time, if Jove should e’er vouchsafe  
 That to the immortal gods of heaven we pour  
 In our own halls the cup of liberty  
 When we have chased the well-armed Greeks from  
 Troy.”

## BOOK VII.

THE illustrious Hector spake, and rapidly  
 Passed through the gate, and with him issued  
 forth

His brother Alexander, — eager, both,  
 For war and combat. As when God bestows,

To glad the long-expecting mariners, 5  
A favorable wind while wearily  
They beat the ocean with their polished oars,  
Their arms all nerveless with their length of toil,—  
Such to the expecting Trojans was the sight  
Of the two chiefs. First Alexander slew 10  
Menesthius, who in Arnè had his home,  
A son of Areïthoüs the king.  
Large-eyed Philomedusa brought him forth  
To the mace-bearer Areïthoüs.  
And Hector smote Eioneus, the spear 15  
Piercing his neck beneath the brazen casque,  
And straightway he dropped lifeless. Glaucus then—  
Son of Hippolochus, and chief among  
The Lycians — in that fiery onset slew  
Iphinoüs, son of Dexius, with his spear. 20  
It pierced the warrior's shoulder as he sprang  
To mount his rapid car, and from the place  
He fell to earth, his limbs relaxed in death  
Now when Minerva of the azure eyes  
Beheld them in the furious combat thus 25  
Wasting the Grecian host, she left the peaks  
Of high Olympus, and came down in haste  
To sacred Ilium. Straight Apollo flew  
To meet her, for he marked from Pergamus  
Her coming, and he greatly longed to give 30  
The victory to the Trojans. As they met  
Beside the beechen tree, the son of Jove,  
The king Apollo, spake to Pallas thus : —

“Why hast thou, daughter of imperial Jove,  
Thus left Olympus in thine eager haste? 35  
Seek'st thou to turn in favor of the Greeks  
War's wavering chances? — for I know too well  
Thou hast no pity when the men of Troy  
Are perishing. But, if thou wilt give ear  
To me, I shall propose a better way. 40  
Cause we the conflict for this day to cease,  
And be it afterward renewed until  
An end be made of Troy, since it hath pleased  
You, goddesses, to lay the city waste.”

And blue-eyed Pallas answered: “Be it so, 45  
O mighty Archer. With a like intent  
I left Olympus for this battle-field  
Of Greeks and Trojans. But by what device  
Think'st thou to bring the combat to a pause?”

Then spake the king Apollo, son of Jove, 50  
In turn to Pallas: “Let us seek to rouse  
The fiery spirit of the Trojan knight  
Hector, that he may challenge in the field  
Some Greek to meet him, singly and alone,  
In mortal combat. Then the well-armed Greeks, 55  
Stung by the bold defiance, will send forth  
A champion against Priam's noble son.”

He spake. The blue-eyed goddess gave assent:  
And straightway Helenus, beloved son  
Of Priam, in his secret mind perceived 60  
The purpose of the gods consulting thus,  
And came and stood by Hector's side and said:—

“O Hector, son of Priam, and like Jove  
In council, wilt thou hearken to my words  
Who am thy brother? Cause the Trojans all      65  
And all the Greeks to sit, while thou shalt stand  
Proclaiming challenge to the bravest man  
Among the Achaians to contend with thee  
In mortal combat. It is not thy fate  
To fall and perish yet, for thus have said      70  
The ever-living gods, whose voice I heard.”

He spake ; and Hector, hearing him, rejoiced,  
And went between the hosts. He bore his spear,  
Holding it in the middle, and pressed back  
The ranks of Trojans, and they all sat down.      75  
And Agamemnon caused the well-armed Greeks  
To sit down also. Meantime Pallas sat,  
With Phœbus of the silver bow, in shape  
Like vultures, on the boughs of the tall beech, —  
The tree of Father Jupiter who bears      80  
The ægis, — and they looked with great delight  
Upon the array of warriors in thick rows,  
Horrid with shields and helms and bristling spears.  
As when the west wind, rising fresh, breathes o’er  
The deep, and darkens all its face with waves,      85  
So seemed the Greeks and Trojans as they sat  
In ranks upon the field, while Hector stood  
Between the armies and bespake them thus :—

“Ye Trojans, and ye well-armed Greeks, give ear  
To what my spirit bids me speak. The son      90  
Of Saturn, throned on high, hath not vouchsafed

To ratify the treaty we have made,  
But meditates new miseries for us both,  
Till ye possess the towery city of Troy,  
Or, vanquished, yield yourselves beside the barks 95  
That brought you o'er the sea. With you are found  
The bravest sons of Greece. If one of these  
Is moved to encounter me, let him stand forth  
And fight with noble Hector. I propose,  
And call on Jove to witness, that if he 100  
Shall slay me with the long blade of his spear,  
My arms are his to spoil and to bestow  
Among the hollow ships ; but he must send  
My body home, that there the sons of Troy  
And Trojan dames may burn it on the pyre. 105  
But if I take his life, and Phœbus crown  
My combat with that glory, I will strip  
His armor off and carry it away  
To hallowed Ilium, there to hang it high  
Within the temple of the archer-god 110  
Apollo ; but his body I will send  
Back to the well-oared ships, that on the beach  
The long-haired Greeks may hold his funeral rites,  
And rear his tomb by the wide Hellespont.  
And then, in time to come, shall some one say, 115  
Sailing in his good ship the dark-blue deep,  
' This is the sepulchre of one who died  
Long since, and whom, though fighting gallantly,  
Illustrious Hector slew.' So shall he say  
Hereafter, and my fame shall never die." 120

He spake ; but utter silence held them all, —  
 Ashamed to shun the encounter, yet afraid  
 To meet it, — till at length, with heavy heart,  
 Rose Menelaus from his seat, and thus  
 Bespake the army with reproachful words : — 125

“ O boastful ones, no longer to be called  
 Greek warriors, but Greek women ! a disgrace  
 Grievous beyond all others will be ours,  
 If none be found in all the Achaian host  
 To meet this Hector. May you, every one, 130  
 There where ye now are sitting, turn to earth  
 And water, craven as ye are, and lost  
 To sense of glory ! I will arm myself  
 For this encounter. With the immortal gods  
 Alone it rests to give the victory.” 135

He spake, and put his glorious armor on.  
 Then, Menelaus, had the Trojan's hand  
 Ended thy life, for he was mightier far  
 Than thou, had not the Achaian kings at once  
 Uprisen to hold thee back, while Atreus' son, 140  
 Wide-ruling Agamemnon, took thy hand  
 In his, and made thee listen while he spake : —

“ Sure, noble Menelaus, thou art mad.  
 Such frenzied daring suits not with the time.  
 Restrain thyself, though thou hast cause for wrath ;  
 Nor in thy pride of courage meet in arms 146  
 One so much mightier, — Hector, Priam's son,  
 Whom every other chief regards with fear,  
 Whom even Achilles, braver far than thou,

Dreads to encounter in the glorious fight. 155  
Withdraw, then, to thy comrades, and sit down.  
The Greeks will send some other champion forth  
Against him ; and though fearless, and athirst  
For combat, he, I deem, will gladly bend  
His weary knees to rest should he escape 155  
From that fierce conflict in the lists alive."

With words like these the Grecian hero changed  
The purpose of his brother, who obeyed  
The prudent counsel ; and with great delight  
The attendants stripped the armor from his breast.  
Then Nestor rose amid the Greeks and said : — 161

" Ye gods ! a great calamity hath fallen  
Upon Achaia. How the aged chief  
Peleus, the illustrious counsellor and sage,  
Who rules the Myrmidons, will now lament ! — 165  
He who once gladly in his palace-home  
Inquired of me the race and pedigree  
Of the Greek warriors. Were he but to know  
That all of them are basely cowering now  
In Hector's presence, how would he uplift 170  
His hands and pray the gods that from his limbs  
The parted soul might pass to the abode  
Of Pluto ! Would to Father Jupiter  
And Pallas and Apollo that again  
I were as young as when the Pylian host 175  
And the Arcadians, mighty with the spear,  
Fought on the banks of rapid Celadon  
And near to Phæa and Iardan's streams.

There godlike Ereuthalion stood among  
Our foremost foes, and on his shoulders bore 184  
The armor of King Areïthoüs, —  
The noble Areïthoüs, whom men  
And graceful women called the Mace-bearer ;  
For not with bow he fought, nor ponderous lance,  
But broke the phalanxes with iron mace. 185  
Lycurgus slew him, but by stratagem,  
And not by strength ; he from a narrow way,  
Where was no room to wield the iron mace,  
Through Areïthoüs thrust the spear : he fell  
Backward ; the victor took his arms, which Mars 190  
The war-god gave, and which in after-time  
Lycurgus wore on many a battle-field.  
And when within his palace he grew old,  
He gave them to be worn by one he loved, —  
To Ereuthalion, who attended him 195  
In battle, and who, wearing them, defied  
The bravest of our host. All trembled ; all  
Held back in fear, nor dared encounter him.  
But me a daring trust in my own strength  
Impelled to meet him. I was youngest then 200  
Of all the chiefs ; I fought, and Pallas gave  
The victory over him, and thus I slew  
The hugest and most strong of men ; he lay  
Extended in vast bulk upon the ground.  
Would I were young as then, my frame unworn 205  
By years ! and Hector of the beamy helm  
Should meet an adversary soon ; but now

Nò one of all the chieftains here, renowned  
To be the bravest of the Achaian race,  
Hastens to meet in arms the Trojan chief." 210

Thus with upbraiding words the old man spake ;  
And straight arose nine warriors from their seats.  
The first was Agamemnon, king of men ;  
The second, brave Tydides Diomed ;  
And then the chieftains Ajax, bold and strong ; 215  
And then Idomeneus, with whom arose  
Meriones, his armor-bearer, great  
As Mars himself in battle. After them,  
Eurypylus, Evæmon's valiant son,  
And Thoas, offspring of Andræmon, rose, 220  
And the divine Ulysses, — claiming all  
To encounter noble Hector in the lists.  
But then spake Nestor the Gerenian knight : —

“ Now let us cast the lot for all, and see  
To whom it falls ; for greatly will he aid 225  
The nobly-armed Achaians, and as great  
Will be his share of honor should he come  
Alive from the hard trial of the fight.”

Then each one marked his lot, and all were cast  
Into the helm of Agamemnon, son 230  
Of Atreus. All the people lifted up  
Their hands in prayer to the ever-living gods,  
And turned their eyes to the broad heaven, and said :

“ Grant, Father Jove, that Ajax, or the son  
Of Tydeus, or the monarch who bears rule 235  
In rich Mycenæ may obtain the lot.”

Such was their prayer, while the Gerenian knight,  
Old Nestor, shook the lots ; and from the helm  
Leaped forth the lot of Ajax, as they wished.  
A herald took it, and from right to left 240  
Bore it through all the assembly, showing it  
To all the leaders of the Greeks. No one  
Knew it, and all disclaimed it. When at last,  
Carried through all the multitude, it came  
To Ajax the renowned, who had inscribed 245  
And laid it in the helmet, he stretched forth  
His hand, while at his side the herald stood,  
And took and looked upon it, knew his sign,  
And gloried as he looked, and cast it down  
Upon the ground before his feet, and said : — 250

“ O friends ! the lot is mine, and I rejoice  
Heartily, for I think to overcome  
The noble Hector. Now, while I put on  
My armor for the fight, pray ye to Jove,  
The mighty son of Saturn, silently, 255  
Unheard by them of Troy, or else aloud,  
Since we fear no one. None by strength of arm  
Shall vanquish me, or find me inexpert  
In battle, nor was I to that degree  
Ill-trained in Salamis, where I was born.” 260

He spake ; and they to Saturn’s monarch-son  
Prayed, looking up to the broad heaven, and said : —

“ O Father Jove ! most mighty, most august !  
Who rulest from the Idæan mount, vouchsafe  
That Ajax bear away the victory 265

And everlasting honor ; but if thou  
 Dost cherish Hector and protect his life,  
 Give equal strength to both, and equal fame."

Such were their words, while Ajax armed himself  
 In glittering brass ; and, when about his limbs 270  
 The mail was buckled, forward rushed the chief.  
 As moves the mighty Mars to war among  
 The heroes whom the son of Saturn sends  
 To struggle on the field in murderous strife,  
 So the great Ajax, bulwark of the Greeks, 275  
 With a grim smile came forward, and with strides  
 Firm-set and long, and shook his ponderous spear.  
 The Greeks exulted at the sight ; dismay  
 Seized every Trojan : even Hector's heart  
 Quailed in his bosom ; yet he might not now 280  
 Withdraw through fear, nor seek to hide among  
 The throng of people, since himself had given  
 The challenge. Ajax, drawing near, upheld  
 A buckler like a rampart, bright with brass,  
 And strong with ox-hides seven. The cunning hand  
 Of Tychius, skilled beyond all other men 285  
 In leather-work, had wrought it at his home  
 In Hyla. He for Ajax framed the shield  
 With hides of pampered bullocks in seven folds,  
 And an eighth fold of brass, — the outside fold. 290  
 This Telamonian Ajax held before  
 His breast, as he approached, and threatening  
 said : —

"Now shalt thou, Hector, singly matched with me,

Learn by what chiefs the Achaian host is led  
 Besides Achilles, mighty though he be 295  
 To break through squadrons, and of lion-heart  
 Still in the beakèd ships in which he crossed  
 The sea he cherishes his wrath against  
 The shepherd of the people, — Atreus' son.  
 But we have those that dare defy thee yet, 300  
 And they are many. Let the fight begin."

Then answered Hector of the plumèd helm : —  
 "O high-born Ajax, son of Telamon,  
 And prince among thy people, think thou not  
 To treat me like a stripling weak of arm, 305  
 Or woman all untrained to tasks of war.  
 I know what battles are and bloody frays,  
 And how to shift to right and left the shield  
 Of seasoned hide, and, unfatigued, maintain  
 The combat ; how on foot to charge the foe 310  
 With steps that move to martial airs, and how  
 To leap into the chariot and pursue  
 The war with rushing steeds. Yet not by stealth  
 Seek I to smite thee, valiant as thou art,  
 But in fair open battle, if I may." 315

He spake, and, brandishing his ponderous lance,  
 Hurlèd it ; and on the outer plate of brass,  
 Which covered the seven bullock-hides, it struck  
 The shield of Ajax. Through the brass and through  
 Six folds of hides the irresistible spear 320  
 Cut its swift way, and at the seventh was stopped.  
 Then high-born Ajax cast his massive spear

In turn, and drove it through the fair, round shield  
Of Priam's son. Through that bright buckler went  
The rapid weapon, pierced the well-wrought mail, <sup>325</sup>  
And tore the linen tunic at the flank.

But Hector stooped and thus avoided death.  
They took their spears again, and, coming close,  
Like lions in their hunger, or wild boars  
Of fearful strength, joined battle. Priam's son <sup>330</sup>  
Sent his spear forward, striking in the midst  
The shield of Ajax, but it broke not through  
The brass ; the metal turned the weapon's point.  
While Ajax, springing onward, smote the shield  
Of Hector, drave his weapon through, and checked  
His enemy's swift advance, and wounded him <sup>336</sup>  
Upon the shoulder, and the black blood flowed.

Yet not for this did plumèd Hector cease  
From combat, but went back, and, lifting up  
A huge, black, craggy stone that near him lay, <sup>340</sup>  
Flung it with force against the middle boss  
Of the broad sevenfold shield that Ajax bore.  
The brass rang with the blow. Then Ajax raised  
A heavier stone, and whirled it, putting forth  
His arm's immeasurable strength ; it brake <sup>345</sup>  
Through Hector's shield as if a millstone's weight  
Had fallen. His knees gave way ; he fell to earth  
Headlong ; yet still he kept his shield. At once  
Apollo raised him up ; and now with swords,  
Encountering hand to hand, they both had flown <sup>350</sup>  
To wound each other, if the heralds sent

As messengers from Jupiter and men  
Had not approached, — Idæus from the side  
Of Troy, Talthybius from the Grecian host, —  
Wise ancients both. Betwixt the twain they held 355  
Their sceptres, and the sage Idæus spake : —

“ Cease to contend, dear sons, in deadly fray ;  
Ye both are loved by cloud-compelling Jove,  
And both are great in war, as all men know.  
The night is come ; be then the night obeyed.” 360

And Telamonian Ajax answered thus : —  
“ Idæus, first let Hector speak of this,  
For he it was who challenged to the field  
The bravest of the Grecian host, and I  
Shall willingly obey if he obeys.” 365

To him in turn the plumèd Hector said : —  
“ Ajax, although God gave thee bulk and strength  
And prudence, and in mastery of the spear  
Thou dost excel the other Greeks, yet now  
Pause we from battle and the rivalry 370  
Of prowess for this day. Another time  
We haply may renew the fight till fate  
Shall part us and bestow the victory  
On one of us. But now the night is here,  
And it is good to obey the night, that thou 375  
Mayst gladden at the fleet the Greeks and all  
Thy friends and comrades, and that I in turn  
May give the Trojan men and long-robed dames,  
In the great city where King Priam reigns,  
Cause to rejoice, — the dames who pray for me, 380

Thronging the hallowed temple. Let us now  
Each with the other leave some noble gift,  
That all men, Greek or Trojan, thus may say :  
'They fought indeed in bitterness of heart,  
But they were reconciled, and parted friends.'” 385

He spake, and gave a silver-studded sword  
And scabbard with its fair embroidered belt ;  
And Ajax gave a girdle brightly dyed  
With purple. Then they both departed, — one  
To join the Grecian host, and one to meet 390  
The Trojan people, who rejoiced to see  
Hector alive, unwounded, and now safe  
From the great might and irresistible arm  
Of Ajax. Straightway to the town they led  
Him for whose life they scarce had dared to hope. 395  
And Ajax also by the well-armed Greeks,  
Exulting in his feats of arms, was brought  
To noble Agamemnon. When the chiefs  
Were in his tents, the monarch sacrificed  
A bullock of five summers to the son 400  
Of Saturn, sovereign Jupiter. They flayed  
The carcass, dressed it, carved away the limbs,  
Divided into smaller parts the flesh,  
Fixed them on spits, and roasted them with care,  
And drew them from the fire. And when the task  
Was finished, and the banquet all prepared, 406  
They feasted, and there was no guest who lacked  
His equal part in that repast. The son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon, brave, and lord

Of wide dominions, gave the chine entire 410  
To Ajax as his due. Now when the calls  
Of thirst and hunger ceased, the aged chief  
Nestor, whose words had ever seemed most wise,  
Opened the council with this prudent speech : —

“ Atrides, and ye other chiefs of Greece ! 415  
Full many a long-haired warrior of our host  
Hath perished. Cruel Mars hath spilt their blood  
Beside Scamander’s gentle stream ; their souls  
Have gone to Hades. Give thou, then, command,  
That all the Greeks to-morrow pause from war, 420  
And come together at the early dawn,  
And bring the dead in chariots drawn by mules  
And oxen, and consume them near our fleet  
With fire, that we, when we return from war,  
May carry to our native land the bones, 425  
And give them to the children of the slain.  
And then will we go forth and heap from earth,  
Upon the plain, a common tomb for all  
Around the funeral pile, and build high towers  
With speed beside it, which shall be alike 430  
A bulwark for our navy and our host.  
And let the entrance be a massive gate,  
Through which shall pass an ample chariot-way.  
And in a circle on its outer edge  
Sink we a trench so deep that neither steeds 435  
Nor men may pass, if these proud Trojans yet  
Should, in the coming battles, press us sore.”

He spake ; the princes all approved his words.

Meanwhile, beside the lofty citadel  
 Of Ilium and at Priam's palace-gates 440  
 In turbulence and fear the Trojans held  
 A council, and the wise Antenor spake : —

“ Hearken, ye Trojans, Dardans, and allies,  
 To what my sober judgment bids me speak.  
 Send we the Argive Helen back with all 445  
 Her treasures ; let the sons of Atreus lead  
 The dame away ; for now we wage the war  
 After our faith is broken, and I deem  
 We cannot prosper till we make amends.”

He spake, and sat him down. The noble chief  
 Paris, the fair-haired Helen's husband, rose 451  
 To answer him, and spake this wingèd speech : —

“ Thy words, Antenor, please me not. Thy skill  
 Could offer better counsels. If those words  
 Were gravely meant, the gods have made thee mad.  
 But let me here, amid these knights of Troy, 456  
 Speak openly my mind. Give up my wife  
 I never will ; but all the wealth I brought  
 With her from Argos I most willingly  
 Restore, with added treasures of my own.” 460

He said, and took his seat, and in the midst  
 Dardanian Priam rose, a counsellor  
 Of godlike wisdom, and thus sagely spake : —

“ Hear me, ye Trojans, Dardans, and allies !  
 I speak the thought that rises in my breast. 465  
 Take now, as ye are wont, your evening meal,  
 And set a watch and keep upon your guard ;

But let Idæus to the hollow ships  
Repair at morning, and to Atreus' sons —  
To Agamemnon and his brother king — 470  
Make known what Paris, author of this strife,  
Proposes, and with fairly ordered speech  
Ask further if they will consent to pause  
From cruel battle till we burn the dead :  
Then be the war renewed till fate shall part 475  
The hosts and give to one the victory."

He spake. The assembly listened and obeyed ;  
All through the camp in groups they took their meal.  
But with the morn Idæus visited  
The hollow ships, and found the Achaian chiefs, 480  
Followers of Mars, in council near the prow  
Of Agamemnon's bark ; and, standing there,  
The loud-voiced herald spake his message thus : —

" Ye sons of Atreus, and ye other chiefs  
Of all the tribes of Greece, I come to you 485  
From Priam and the eminent men of Troy,  
To say, if it be pleasing to your ears,  
What Alexander, author of the war,  
Proposes. All the wealth which in his ships  
He brought to Troy—would he had perished first! —  
He will, with added treasures of his own, 490  
Freely restore ; but her who was the wife  
Of gallant Menelaus he denies  
To render back, though all who dwell in Troy  
Join to demand it. I am furthermore 495  
Bidden to ask if you consent to pause

From cruel battle till we burn our dead :  
Then be the war renewed till fate shall part  
The hosts and give to one the victory."

He spake ; and all were silent for a space. 500  
Then spake at length the valiant Diomed : —

" Let none consent to take the Trojan's goods,  
Nor even Helen ; for a child may see  
The utter ruin hanging over Troy."

He spake. The admiring Greeks confirmed with  
shouts 505

The words of Diomed the knight, and thus  
King Agamemnon to Idæus said : —

" Idæus, thou thyself hast heard the Greeks  
Pronounce their answer. What to them seems good  
Pleases me also. For the slain, I give 510  
Consent to burn them ; to the dead we bear  
No hatred ; when they fall the rite of fire  
Should soon be paid. Let Juno's husband, Jove  
The Thunderer, bear witness to our truce."

The monarch spake, and raised to all the gods 515  
His sceptre, while Idæus took his way  
To hallowed Ilium. There in council sat  
Trojans and Dardans, waiting his return.  
He came, and standing in the midst declared  
His message. Then they all went forth in haste, 520  
Some to collect the slain and some to fell  
Trees in the forest. From their well-benched ships  
The Achaïans also issued, some to bring  
The dead together, some to gather wood.

Now from the smooth deep ocean-stream the sun  
Began to climb the heavens, and with new rays 526  
Smote the surrounding fields. The Trojans met,  
But found it hard to know their dead again.

They washed away the clotted blood, and laid —  
Shedding hot tears — the bodies on the cars. 530

And since the mighty Priam's word forbade  
All wailing, silently they bore away  
Their slaughtered friends, and heaped them on the  
pyre

With aching hearts, and, when they had consumed  
The dead with fire, returned to hallowed Troy. 535

The nobly-armed Achaians also heaped  
Their slaughtered warriors on the funeral pile  
With aching hearts ; and when they had consumed  
Their dead with fire they sought their hollow ships.

And ere the morning came, while earth was gray  
With twilight, by the funeral pile arose 541

A chosen band of Greeks, who, going forth,  
Heaped round it from the earth a common tomb  
For all, and built a wall and lofty towers  
Near it, — a bulwark for the fleet and host. 545

And in the wall they fitted massive gates,  
Through which there passed an ample chariot-way ;  
And on its outer edge they sank a trench, —  
Broad, deep, — and planted it with pointed stakes.  
So labored through the night the long-haired Greeks.

The gods who sat beside the Thunderer Jove 551  
Admired the mighty labor of the Greeks ;

But Neptune, he who shakes the earth, began : —

“ O Father Jove, henceforth will any one  
Of mortal men consult the immortal gods ? 555  
Seest thou not how the long-haired Greeks have reared  
A wall before their navy, and have drawn  
A trench around it, yet have brought the gods  
No liberal hecatombs ? Now will the fame  
Of this their work go forth wherever shines 560  
The light of day, and men will quite forget  
The wall which once we built with toiling hands —  
Phœbus Apollo and myself — around  
The city of renowned Laomedon.”

And cloud-compelling Jove in wrath replied : —  
“ Earth-shaking power ! what words are these ?

Some god 566

Of meaner rank and feebler arm than thou  
Might haply dread the work the Greeks have planned.  
But as for thee, thy glory shall be known  
Wherever shines the day ; and when at last 570  
The crested Greeks, departing in their ships,  
Shall seek their native coasts, do thou o'erthrow  
The wall they built, and sink it in the deep,  
And cover the great shore again with sand.  
Thus shall their bulwark vanish from the plain.” 575

So talked they with each other while the sun  
Was setting. But the Achæians now had brought  
Their labors to an end ; they slew their steers  
Beside the tents and shared the evening meal,  
While many ships had come to land with store 580

Of wine from Lemnos, which Euneus sent, —  
Euneus whom Hypsipyle brought forth  
To Jason, shepherd of the people. These  
Brought wine, a thousand measures, as a gift  
To Agamemnon and his brother king, 585  
The sons of Atreus. But the long-haired Greeks  
Bought for themselves their wines ; some gave their  
brass,

And others shining steel ; some bought with hides,  
And some with steers, and some with slaves, and thus  
Prepared an ample banquet. Through the night 590  
Feasted the long-haired Greeks. The Trojan host  
And their auxiliar warriors banqueted  
Within the city-walls. Through all that night  
The Great Disposer, Jove, portended woe  
To both with fearful thunderings. All were pale 595  
With terror ; from their beakers all poured wine  
Upon the ground, and no man dared to drink  
Who had not paid to Saturn's mighty son  
The due libation. Then they laid them down  
To rest, and so received the balm of sleep. 600

## BOOK VIII.

NOW morn in saffron robes had shed her light  
O'er all the earth, when Jove the Thunderer  
Summoned the gods to council on the heights  
Of many-peaked Olympus. He addressed  
The assembly, and all listened as he spake : — 5  
“ Hear, all ye gods and all ye goddesses !  
While I declare the thought within my breast.  
Let none of either sex presume to break  
The law I give, but cheerfully obey,  
That my design may sooner be fulfilled. 10  
Whoever, stealing from the rest, shall seek  
To aid the Grecian cause, or that of Troy,  
Back to Olympus, scourged and in disgrace,  
Shall he be brought, or I will seize and hurl  
The offender down to rayless Tartarus, 15  
Deep, deep in the great gulf below the earth,  
With iron gates and threshold forged of brass,  
As far beneath the shades as earth from heaven.  
Then shall he learn how greatly I surpass  
All other gods in power. Try if ye will, 20  
Ye gods, that all may know : suspend from heaven  
A golden chain ; let all the immortal host  
Cling to it from below : ye could not draw,  
Strive as ye might, the all-disposing Jove  
From heaven to earth. And yet, if I should choose  
To draw it upward to me, I should lift, 26

With it and you, the earth itself and sea  
Together, and I then would bind the chain  
Around the summit of the Olympian mount,  
And they should hang aloft. So far my power 30  
Surpasses all the power of gods and men."

He spake ; and all the great assembly, hushed  
In silence, wondered at his threatening words,  
Until at length the blue-eyed Pallas said : —

" Our Father, son of Saturn, mightiest 35  
Among the potentates, we know thy power  
Is not to be withstood, yet are we moved  
With pity for the warlike Greeks, who bear  
An evil fate and waste away in war.  
If such be thy command, we shall refrain 40  
From mingling in the combat, yet will aid  
The Greeks with counsel which may be their guide,  
Lest by thy wrath they perish utterly."

The Cloud-compeller Jove replied, and smiled : —  
" Tritonia, daughter dear, be comforted. 45

I spake not in the anger of my heart,  
And I have naught but kind intents for thee.

He spake, and to his chariot yoked the steeds,  
Fleet, brazen-footed, and with flowing manes  
Of gold, and put his golden armor on, 50  
And took the golden scourge, divinely wrought,  
And, mounting, touched the coursers with the lash  
To urge them onward. Not unwillingly  
Flew they between the earth and starry heaven,  
Until he came to Ida, moist with springs 55

And nurse of savage beasts, and to the height  
Of Gargarus, where lay his sacred field,  
And where his fragrant altar fumed. He checked  
Their course, and there the Father of the gods  
And men released them from the yoke and caused 60  
A cloud to gather round them. Then he sat,  
Exulting in the fulness of his might,  
Upon the summit, whence his eye beheld  
The towers of Ilium and the ships of Greece.

Now in their tents the long-haired Greeks had  
shared 65

A hasty meal, and girded on their arms.  
The Trojans, also, in their city armed  
Themselves for war, as eager for the fight,  
Though fewer ; for a hard necessity  
Forced them to combat for their little ones 70  
And wives. They set the city-portals wide,  
And forth the people issued, foot and horse  
Together, and a mighty din arose.  
And now, when host met host, their shields and  
spears  
Were mingled in disorder ; men of might 75  
Encountered, cased in mail, and bucklers clashed  
Their bosses ; loud the clamor : cries of pain  
And boastful shouts arose from those who fell  
And those who slew, and earth was drenched with  
blood.

While yet 't was morning, and the holy light 80  
Of day grew bright, the men of both the hosts

Were smitten and were slain ; but when the sun  
Stood high in middle heaven, the All-Father took  
His golden scales, and in them laid the fates 84  
Which bring the sleep of death, — the fate of those  
Who tamed the Trojan steeds, and those who warred  
For Greece in brazen armor. By the midst  
He held the balance, and, behold, the fate  
Of Greece in that day's fight sank down until 89  
It touched the nourishing earth, while that of Troy  
Rose and flew upward toward the spacious heaven.  
With that the Godhead thundered terribly  
From Ida's height, and sent his lightnings down  
Among the Achaian army. They beheld  
In mute amazement and grew pale with fear. 95

Then neither dared Idomeneus remain,  
Nor Agamemnon, on the ground, nor stayed  
The chieftains Ajax, ministers of Mars.  
Gerenian Nestor, guardian of the Greeks,  
Alone was left behind, and he remained 100  
Unwillingly. A steed of those that drew  
His car was sorely wounded by a shaft  
Which Alexander, fair-haired Helen's spouse,  
Sent from his bow. It pierced the forehead where  
The mane begins, and where a wound is death. 105  
The arrow pierced him to the brain ; he reared  
And whirled in torture with the wound, and scared  
His fellow-coursers. While the aged man  
Hastened to sever with his sword the thongs  
That bound him to the car, the rapid steeds 110

Of Hector bore their valiant master on  
With the pursuing crowd. The aged chief  
Had perished then, if gallant Diomed  
Had not perceived his plight. He lifted up  
His voice, and, shouting to Ulysses, said : — 115

“ High-born Ulysses, man of subtle shifts,  
Son of Laertes, whither dost thou flee ?  
Why like a coward turn thy back ? Beware,  
Lest there some weapon smite thee. Stay and guard  
This aged warrior from his furious foe.” 120

So spake he ; but the much-enduring man,  
Ulysses, heard not the reproof, and passed  
Rapidly toward the hollow ships of Greece.  
Tydides, single-handed, made his way  
Among the foremost warriors, till he stood 125  
Before the horses of the aged son  
Of Neleus, and in wingèd accents said : —

“ The younger warriors press thee sore, old chief !  
Thy strength gives way ; the weariness of age  
Is on thee ; thy attendant is not strong ; 130  
Thy steeds are slow. Mount, then, my car, and see  
What Trojan horses are ; how rapidly  
They turn to right and left, and chase and flee.  
I took them from the terror of the field,  
Æneas. To our servants leave thine own, 135  
While we with these assault the Trojan knights,  
And teach even Hector that the spear I wield  
Can make as furious havoc as his own.”

He spake ; and Nestor, the Gerenian knight,

Complied. The two attendants, valiant men, — 140  
 Sthenelus and the good Eurymedon, —  
 Took charge of Nestor's steeds. The chieftains  
 climbed

The car of Diomed, and Nestor took  
 Into his hand the embroidered reins and lashed  
 The horses with the scourge. They quickly came  
 To Hector. As the Trojan hastened on, 146  
 The son of Tydeus hurled a spear ; it missed,  
 But spared not Eniopeus, him who held  
 The reins, the hero's charioteer, and son  
 Of brave Thebæus. In the breast between 150  
 The paps it smote him ; from the car he fell,  
 And the swift horses started back ; his soul  
 And strength passed from him. Hector bitterly  
 Grieved for his death, yet left him where he fell,  
 And sought another fitting charioteer. 155  
 Nor had the fiery coursers long to wait  
 A guide, for valiant Archeptolemus,  
 The son of Iphitus, was near at hand.

And him he caused to mount the chariot drawn  
 By his fleet steeds, and gave his hand the reins. 160

Then great had been the slaughter ; fearful deeds  
 Had then been done ; the Trojans had been scared  
 Into their town like lambs into the fold, —  
 Had not the Father of the immortal gods  
 And mortal men beheld, and from on high 165  
 Terribly thundered, sending to the earth  
 A bolt of fire. He flung it down before

The car of Diomed ; and fiercely glared  
The blazing sulphur ; both the frightened steeds  
Cowered trembling by the chariot. Nestor's hand  
Let fall the embroidered reins ; his spirit sank 171  
With fear, and thus he said to Diomed : —

“ Tydides, turn thy firm-paced steeds, and flee.  
Dost thou not see that victory from Jove  
Attends thee not ? To-day doth Saturn's son 175  
Award the glory to the Trojan chief.  
Hereafter he will make it ours, if such  
Be his good pleasure. No man, though he be  
The mightiest among men, can thwart the will  
Of Jupiter, with whom abides all power.” 180

The great in battle, Diomed, replied : —  
“ Truly, O ancient man, thou speakest well ;  
But this it is that grieves me to the heart, —  
That Hector to the Trojan host will say,  
' I put to flight Tydides, and he sought 185  
Shelter among his ships.' Thus will he boast  
Hereafter ; may earth open then for me ! ”

And Nestor, the Gerenian knight, rejoined : —  
“ What, son of warlike Tydeus, hast thou said ?  
Though Hector call thee faint of heart and weak, 190  
The Trojans and Dardanians, and the wives  
Of the stout-hearted Trojans armed with shields,  
Whose husbands in their youthful prime thy hand  
Hath laid in dust, will not believe his words.”

Thus having said, he turned the firm-paced steeds  
Rearward, and mingled with the flying crowd. 196

And now the Trojans and their leader gave  
A mighty cry, and poured on them a storm  
Of deadly darts, and crested Hector raised  
His thundering voice and shouted after them : — 200

“ O son of Tydeus ! the swift-riding Greeks  
Have honored thee beyond all other men,  
At banquets, with high place and delicate meats  
And flowing cups. They will despise thee now,  
For thou art like a woman. Timorous girl ! 205  
Take thyself hence, and never think that I  
Shall yield to thee, that thou mayst climb our  
towers

And bear away our women in thy ships ;  
For I shall give thee first the doom of death.”

He spake ; and Diomed, in doubtful mood, 210  
Questioned his spirit whether he should turn  
His steeds and fight with Hector. Thrice the  
thought

Arose within his mind, and thrice on high  
Uttered the all-forecasting Jupiter  
His thunder from the Idæan mount, a sign 215  
Of victory changing to the Trojan side.

Then Hector to the Trojans called aloud : —

“ Trojans and Lycians all, and ye who close  
In deadly fight, the sons of Dardanus !  
Acquit yourselves like men, my friends ; recall 220  
Your fiery valor now, for I perceive  
The son of Saturn doth award to me  
Victory and vast renown, and to the Greeks

Destruction. Fools ! who built this slender wall  
Which we condemn, which cannot stand before 225  
The strength I bring ; our steeds can overleap  
The trench they digged. When I shall reach their  
fleet,

Remember the consuming power of fire,  
That I may give their vessels to the flames,  
And hew the Achaians down beside their prows, 230  
While they are wrapped in the bewildering smoke."

He spake ; and then he cheered his coursers  
thus : —

" Xanthus, Podargus, Lampus nobly bred,  
And Æthon, now repay the generous care,  
The pleasant grain which my Andromache, 235  
Daughter of great Eëtion, largely gives.  
She mingles wine that ye may drink at will  
Ere yet she ministers to me, who boast  
To be her youthful husband. Let us now  
Pursue with fiery haste, that we may seize 240  
The shield of Nestor, the great fame of which  
Has reached to heaven, — an orb of massive gold  
Even to the handles. Let us from the limbs  
Of Diomed, the tamer of fleet steeds,  
Strip off the glorious mail that Vulcan forged : 245  
This done, our hope may be that all the Greeks  
Will climb their galleys and depart to-night."

So boasted he ; but queenly Juno's ire  
Was kindled, and she shuddered on her throne  
Till great Olympus trembled. Thus she spake 250

To Neptune, mighty ruler of the deep. —

“Earth-shaker ! thou who rulest far and wide !  
Is there no pity for the perishing Greeks  
Within that breast of thine ? They bring to thee  
At Helicè and Ægæ costly gifts 255  
And many, wherefore thy desire should be  
That they may win the victory. If the gods  
Who favor the Achaïans should combine  
To drive the Trojans back, and hold in check  
High-thundering Jupiter, the God would sit 260  
In sullen grief on Ida’s top alone.”

Earth-shaking Neptune answered in disdain : —  
“O Juno, rash in speech ! what words are these ?  
Think not that I can wish to join the gods  
In conflict with the monarch Jupiter, 265  
The son of Saturn, mightier than we all.”

So held they colloquy. Meanwhile the space  
Betwixt the galleys and the trench and wall  
Was crowded close with steeds and shielded men ;  
For Hector, son of Priam, terrible 270  
As Mars the lightning-footed, drave them on  
Before him. Jove decreed him such renown.  
And now would he have given that noble fleet  
To the consuming flame, if Juno, queen  
Of heaven, had not beheld, and moved the heart 275  
Of Agamemnon to exhort the Greeks  
That they should turn and combat. With quick  
steps  
He passed beside the fleet, among the tents,

Bearing in his strong hand his purple robe,  
And climbed the huge black galley which had  
brought

280

Ulysses to the war, — for in the midst  
It lay, and thence the king might send his voice  
To either side, as far as to the tents  
Of Ajax and Achilles, who had moored  
Their galleys at the different extremes  
Of the long camp, confiding in their might  
Of arm and their own valor. Thence he called,  
With loud, clear utterance, to the Achaian host : —

285

“ O Greeks ! shame on ye ! cravens who excel  
In form alone ! Where now are all the boasts  
Of your invincible valor, — the vain words  
Ye uttered pompously when at the feast  
In Lemnos sitting ye devoured the flesh  
Of hornèd beeves, and drank from bowls of wine,  
Flower-crowned, and bragged that each of you  
would be

295

A match for fivescore Trojans, or for twice  
Fivescore ? And now we all are not a match  
For Hector singly, who will give our fleet  
Soon to consuming flames. O Father Jove,  
Was ever mighty monarch visited  
By thee with such affliction, or so robbed  
Of high renown ! And yet in my good ship,  
Bound to this luckless coast, I never passed  
By thy fair altars that I did not burn  
The fat and thighs of oxen, with a prayer

300

305

That I might sack the well-defended Troy.  
Now be at least one wish of mine fulfilled, —  
That we may yet escape and get us hence ;  
Nor let the Trojans thus destroy the Greeks.”

He spake, and wept. The All-Father, pitying him,  
Consented that his people should escape 311  
The threatened ruin. Instantly he sent  
His eagle, bird of surest augury,  
Which, bearing in his talons a young fawn,  
The offspring of a nimble-footed roe, 315  
Dropped it at the fair altar where the Greeks  
Paid sacrifice to Panomphæan Jove.

And they, when they beheld, and knew that Jove  
Had sent the bird, took courage, rallying,  
And rushed against the Trojans. Then no chief 320  
Of all the Greeks — though many they — could boast  
That he before Tydides urged his steeds  
To sudden speed and drave them o’er the trench,  
And mingled in the combat. First of all  
He struck down Agelaus, Phradmon’s son, 325  
Armed as he was, who turned his car to fly,  
And as he turned, Tydides with his spear  
Transfixed his back between the shoulder-blades,  
And drave the weapon through his breast. He fell  
To earth, his armor clashing with his fall. 330  
Then Agamemnon followed, and with him  
His brother Menelaus ; after these  
The chieftains Ajax, fearful in their strength ;  
Idomeneus, and he who bore his arms, —

Meriones, like Mars in battle-field ; 335  
Eurypylus, Evæmon's glorious son ;  
And ninthly Teucer came, who bent his bow  
Beneath the shield of Ajax Telamon, —  
For Ajax moved his shield from side to side,  
And thence the archer looked abroad, and aimed 340  
His arrows thence. Whoever in the throng  
Was struck fell lifeless. Teucer all the while,  
As hides a child behind his mother's robe,  
Sheltered himself by Ajax, whose great shield  
Concealed the chief from sight. What Trojan first  
Did faithful Teucer slay? Orsilochus, 346  
Dætor, and Ophelestes, Ormenus,  
Chromius, and Lycophontes nobly born,  
And Hamopaon, Polyæmon's son,  
And Melanippus, — one by one the shafts 350  
Of Teucer stretched them on their mother earth.  
Then Agamemnon, king of men, rejoiced  
As he beheld him, with his sturdy bow,  
Breaking the serried phalanxes of Troy ;  
And came, and, standing near, bespake him thus : —  
“ Beloved Teucer ! son of Telamon, 356  
Prince of the people ! ever be thy shafts  
Aimed thus, and thou shalt be the light and pride  
Of Greece, and of thy father Telamon,  
Who reared thee from a little child with care 360  
In his own halls, though spurious was thy birth.  
Go on to do him honor, though he now  
Be far away. And here I say to thee, —

And I will keep my word, — if Jupiter  
 The Ægis-bearer and Minerva deign 365  
 To let me level the strong walls of Troy,  
 To thee will I assign the noblest prize  
 After my own, — a tripod, or two steeds  
 And chariot, or a wife to share thy bed.”

And thus the blameless Teucer made reply : — 370  
 “ Why, glorious son of Atreus, wouldst thou thus  
 Admonish me, while yet I do my best,  
 And pause not in the combat ? From the time  
 When we began to drive the enemy back  
 To Ilium, I have smitten and have slain 375  
 Their warriors with my bow. Eight barbèd shafts  
 I sent, and each has pierced some warlike youth ;  
 But this fierce wolf-dog have I failed to strike.”

He spake, and sent another arrow forth  
 At Hector with an eager aim. It missed 380  
 Its mark, but struck Gorgythion down, the brave  
 And blameless son of Priam ; through his breast  
 The arrow went. Fair Castianira brought  
 The warrior forth, — a dame from Æsymba,  
 Beautiful as a goddess. As within 385  
 A garden droops a poppy to the ground,  
 Bowed by its weight and by the rains of spring,  
 So drooped his head within the heavy casque.

And then did Teucer send another shaft  
 At Hector, eager still to smite. It missed 390  
 Its aim again, for Phœbus turned aside  
 The arrow, but it struck the charioteer

Of Hector, Archeptolemus the brave,  
When rushing to the fight, and pierced his breast  
Close to the nipple ; from the car he fell, 395  
The swift steeds started back, and from his limbs  
The life and strength departed. A deep grief  
For his slain charioteer came darkly o'er  
The mind of Hector, yet, though sorrowing,  
He left him where he fell, and straightway called 400  
Cebriones, his brother, who was near,  
To mount and take the reins. Cebriones  
Heard and obeyed. Then from the shining car  
Leaped Hector with a mighty cry, and seized  
A ponderous stone, and, bent to crush him, ran 405  
At Teucer, who had from his quiver drawn  
One of his sharpest arrows, placing it  
Upon the bowstring. As he drew the bow,  
The strong-armed Hector hurled the jagged stone,  
And smote him near the shoulder, where the neck  
And breast are sundered by the collar-bone, — 410  
A fatal spot. The bowstring brake ; the arm  
Fell nerveless ; on his knees the archer sank,  
And dropped the bow. Then did not Ajax leave  
His fallen brother to the foe, but walked 415  
Around him, sheltering him beneath his shield,  
Till two dear friends of his — Menestheus, son  
Of Echius, and Alastor nobly born —  
Approached, and took him up and carried him,  
Heavily groaning, to the hollow ships. 420

Then did Olympian Jove again inspire

The Trojan host with valor, and they drave  
 The Achaians backward to the yawning trench.  
 Then Hector came, with fury in his eyes,  
 Among the foremost warriors. As a hound, 425  
 Sure of his own swift feet, attacks behind  
 The lion or wild boar, and tears his flank,  
 Yet warily observes him as he turns,  
 So Hector followed close the long-haired Greeks,  
 And ever slew the hindmost as they fled. 430  
 Yet now, when they in flight had crossed again  
 The trench and palisades, and many a one  
 Had died by Trojan hands, they made a halt  
 Before their ships, and bade each other stand,  
 And lifted up their hands and prayed aloud 435  
 To all the gods ; while Hector, urging on  
 His long-maned steeds, and with stern eyes that  
 seemed

The eyes of Gorgon or of murderous Mars,  
 Hither and thither swept across the field.

The white-armed Juno saw, and, sorrowing, 440  
 Addressed Minerva with these wingèd words : —

“ Ah me ! thou daughter of the God who bears  
 The ægis, shall we not descend to aid  
 The perishing Greeks in their extremity ?  
 A cruel doom is theirs, to fall, destroyed 445  
 By one man’s rage, — the terrible assault  
 Of Hector, son of Priam, who has made  
 Insufferable havoc in the field.”

And thus in turn the blue-eyed Pallas spake : —

“That warrior long ere this had lost his life, 450  
Slain by the Greeks on his paternal soil,  
But that my father’s mind is warped by wrath.  
Unjust to me and harsh, he thwarts my aims,  
Forgetting all I did for Hercules,  
His son, — how often, when Eurystheus set 455  
A task too hard for him, I saved his life.  
To heaven he raised his eyes and wept, and Jove  
Despatched me instantly to succor him.  
And yet if I, in my forecasting mind,  
Had known all this when he was bid to bring 460  
From strong-walled Erebus, the dog of hell,  
He had not safely crossed the gulf of Styx.  
But now Jove hates me ; now he grants the wish  
Of Thetis, who hath kissed his knees and touched  
His beard caressingly, and prayed that he 465  
Would crown the overthrower of walled towns,  
Achilles, with great honor. Well, the time  
Will come when he shall call me yet again  
His dear Minerva. Hasten now to yoke  
For us thy firm-paced steeds, while in the halls 470  
Of ægis-bearing Jupiter I brace  
My armor on for war, — and I shall see  
If Hector of the beamy helm, the son  
Of Priam, will rejoice when we appear  
Upon the field again. Assuredly 475  
The men of Troy shall die, to feast the birds  
Of prey and dogs beside the Grecian fleet.”  
She ended, and the white-armed deity

Juno obeyed her. Juno the august,  
The mighty Saturn's daughter, hastily 480  
Caparisoned the golden-bitted steeds.  
Meanwhile, Minerva on the palace-floor  
Of Jupiter let drop the gorgeous robe  
Of many hues, which her own hands had wrought,  
And, putting on the Cloud-compeller's mail, 485  
Stood armed for cruel war. And then she climbed  
The glorious car, and took in hand the spear —  
Huge, heavy, strong — with which she overthrows  
The serried phalanxes of valiant men  
Whene'er this daughter of the Almighty One 490  
Is angered. Juno bore the lash, and urged  
The coursers to their speed. The gates of heaven  
Opened before them of their own accord, —  
Gates guarded by the Hours, on whom the care  
Of the great heaven and of Olympus rests, 495  
To open or to close the wall of cloud.  
Through these they guided their impatient steeds.

From Ida Jupiter beheld, in wrath,  
And summoned Iris of the golden wings,  
And bade her do this errand : " Speed thee hence, 500  
Fleet Iris ! turn them back ; allow them not  
Thus to defy me : it is not for them  
To engage with me in war. I give my word, —  
Nor shall it lack fulfilment, — I will make  
The swift steeds lame that draw their car, and hurl  
The riders down, and dash the car itself 506  
To fragments. Ten long years shall wear away

Before they cease to suffer from the wounds  
 Made by the thunderbolt. Minerva thus  
 May learn the fate of those who strive with Jove. 510  
 With Juno I am less displeased, for she  
 Is ever bent to thwart my purposes."

He spake ; and Iris, with the tempest's speed  
 Departing, bore the message from the heights  
 Of Ida to the great Olympus, where, 515  
 Among the foremost passes of the mount,  
 All seamed with hollow vales, she met and stayed  
 The pair, delivering thus the word of Jove : —

" Now whither haste ye ? What strange madness  
 fires

Your breasts ? The son of Saturn suffers not 520  
 That ye befriend the Greeks. He threatens thus, —  
 And will fulfil his threat, — that he will make  
 'The coursers lame that draw your car, and hurl  
 The riders down, and dash the car itself  
 To fragments, and that ten long years must pass 525  
 Ere ye shall cease to suffer from the wounds  
 Made by the thunderbolt. So shalt thou learn,  
 O Pallas ! what it is to strive with Jove.  
 With Juno is he less displeased, for she  
 Is ever bent to thwart his purposes ; 530  
 But thou, he says, art guilty above all,  
 And shameless as a hound, if thou dare lift  
 Thy massive spear against thy father Jove."

So spake fleet-footed Iris, and withdrew ;  
 And thus again to Pallas Juno said : — 535

"Child of the Ægis-bearer ! let us strive  
 With Jove no longer for the sake of men,  
 But let one perish and another live,  
 As chance may rule the hour, and let the God,  
 Communing with his secret mind, mete out 540  
 To Greeks and Trojans their just destiny."

She spake, and turned the firm-paced coursers  
 back,

The coursers with fair-flowing manes. The Hours  
 Unyoked them, bound them to the ambrosial stalls,  
 And leaned against the shining walls the car ; 545  
 While Juno and Minerva went among  
 The other deities and took their place  
 Upon their golden seats, though sad at heart.  
 Then with his steeds, and in his bright-wheeled car,  
 Came Jove from Ida to the dwelling-place 550  
 Of gods upon Olympus. There did he  
 Who shakes the islands loose the steeds and bring  
 The chariot to its place, and o'er it spread  
 Its covering of lawn. The Thunderer  
 Seated himself upon his golden throne, 555  
 The great Olympus trembling as he stepped ;  
 While Juno and Minerva sat apart  
 Together, nor saluted him, nor asked  
 Of aught ; but he perceived their thoughts and  
 said : —

"Juno and Pallas ! why so sad ? Not long 560  
 Ye toiled in glorious battle to destroy  
 The Trojans, whom ye hold in bitter hate :

This strength of mine, and this invincible arm  
 Not all the gods upon the Olympian mount  
 Can turn to flight, while your fair limbs were seized  
 With trembling ere ye entered on the shock 566  
 And havoc of the war. Now let me say —  
 And well the event would have fulfilled my words —  
 That, smitten with the thunder from my hand,  
 Your chariots never would have brought you back 570  
 To this Olympus and the abode of gods.”

He spake ; while Pallas and the queen of heaven  
 Repined with close-pressed lips, and in their hearts  
 Devised new mischiefs for the Trojan race.

Silent Minerva sat, nor dared express 575  
 The anger that she bore her father Jove ;  
 But Juno could not curb her wrath, and spake : —  
 “ What words, austere Saturnius, hast thou said ?  
 Thou art, we know, invincible in might ;  
 Yet must we sorrow for the heroic Greeks, 580  
 Who, by a cruel fate, are perishing.  
 We stand aloof from war, if thou require ;  
 Yet would we counsel the Achaian host,  
 Lest by thy wrath they perish utterly.”

And then the Cloud-compeller, answering, said : —  
 “ O Juno, large-eyed and august, if thou 586  
 Look forth to-morrow, thou shalt then behold  
 The all-powerful son of Saturn laying waste  
 With greater havoc still the mighty host  
 Of warlike Greeks. For Hector, great in war, 590  
 Shall pause not from the conflict, till he rouse

The swift-paced son of Peleus at the ships,  
 When, pent in narrow space, the armies fight  
 For slain Patroclus : such the will of fate.  
 As for thyself, I little heed thy rage : 595  
 Not even shouldst thou wander to the realm  
 Where earth and ocean end, where Saturn sits  
 Beside Iapetus, and neither light  
 Of overgoing suns nor breath of wind  
 Refreshes them, but gulfs of Tartarus 600  
 Surround them, — shouldst thou even thither bend  
 Thy way, I shall not heed thy rage, who art  
 Beyond all others shamelessly perverse.”

He ceased ; but white-armed Juno answered not.  
 And now into the sea the sun's bright light 605  
 Went down, and o'er the foodful earth was drawn  
 Night's shadow. Most unwillingly the sons  
 Of Troy beheld the sunset. To the Greeks  
 Eagerly wished the welcome darkness came.

Then from the fleet illustrious Hector led 610  
 The Trojans, and beside the eddying stream,  
 In a clear space uncumbered by the slain,  
 Held council. There, alighting from their cars,  
 They listened to the words that Hector spake, —  
 Hector, beloved of Jove. He held a spear, 615  
 In length eleven cubits, with a blade  
 Of glittering brass, bound with a ring of gold.  
 On this he leaned, and spake these wingèd words : —

“ Hear me, ye Trojans, Dardans, and allies.  
 But now I thought that, having first destroyed 620

The Achaian host and fleet, we should return  
This night to wind-swept Ilium. To their aid  
The darkness comes, and saves the Greeks, and  
saves

Their galleys ranged along the ocean-side.  
Obey we, then, the dark-browed night ; prepare <sup>625</sup>  
Our meal ; unyoke the steeds with flowing manes,  
And set their food before them. Bring at once  
Oxen and fatlings of the flock from town,  
And from your dwellings bread and pleasant wine.  
And let us gather store of wood, to feed <sup>630</sup>  
A multitude of blazing fires all night,  
Till Morning, daughter of the Dawn, appear, —  
Fires that shall light the sky, lest in the hours  
Of darkness with their ships the long-haired Greeks  
Attempt escape across the mighty deep. <sup>635</sup>  
And, that they may not climb their decks unharmed,  
Let every foeman bear a wound to cure  
At home, — an arrow-wound or gash of spear,  
Given as he leaps on board. So other foes  
Shall dread a conflict with the knights of Troy. <sup>640</sup>  
And let the heralds, dear to Jove, command  
That all grown youths and hoary-headed men  
Keep watch about the city in the towers  
Built by the gods ; and let the feebler sex  
Kindle large fires upon their hearths at home ; <sup>645</sup>  
And let the guard be strengthened, lest the foe  
Should steal into the city while its sons  
Are all abroad. Thus let it be till morn,

Brave Trojans ! I but speak of what the time  
Requires, and on the morrow I shall speak 650  
Of what the Trojan knights have then to do.  
My prayer to Jove and to the other gods,  
And my hope is, that I may drive away  
These curs, brought hither by an evil fate  
In their black ships. All night will we keep watch,  
And, arming, with the early morn renew 656  
The desperate conflict at the hollow ships.  
Then shall I see if valiant Diomed  
Tydides has the power to make me leave  
The Grecian galleys for the city-walls, 660  
Or whether I shall slay him with my spear  
And take his bloody spoils. To-morrow's sun  
Will make his valor known, if he withstand  
The assault of this my weapon. Yet I think  
The sunrise will behold him slain among 665  
The first, with many comrades lying round.  
Would that I knew myself as certainly  
Secure from death and the decays of age,  
And to be held in honor like the gods  
Apollo and Minerva, as I know 670  
This day will bring misfortune to the Greeks ! ”

So Hector spake, and all the Trojan host  
Applauded ; from the yoke forthwith they loosed  
The sweaty steeds, and bound them to the cars  
With halters ; to the town they sent in haste 675  
For oxen and the fatlings of the flock,  
And to their homes for bread and pleasant wine,

And gathered fuel in large store. The winds  
Bore up the fragrant fumes from earth to heaven.

So, high in hope, they sat the whole night through  
In warlike lines, and many watch-fires blazed. <sup>681</sup>  
As when in heaven the stars look brightly forth  
Round the clear-shining moon, while not a breeze  
Stirs in the depths of air, and all the stars  
Are seen, and gladness fills the shepherd's heart, <sup>685</sup>  
So many fires in sight of Ilium blazed,  
Lit by the sons of Troy, between the ships  
And eddying Xanthus : on the plain there shone  
A thousand ; fifty warriors by each fire  
Sat in its light. Their steeds beside the cars — <sup>690</sup>  
Champing their oats and their white barley — stood,  
And waited for the golden morn to rise.

BOOK IX.

THE Trojans thus kept watch ; while through  
the night

The power of Flight, companion of cold Fear,  
Wrought on the Greeks, and all their bravest men  
Were bowed beneath a sorrow hard to bear.  
As when two winds upturn the fishy deep, — <sup>5</sup>  
The north wind and the west, that suddenly  
Blow from the Thracian coast ; the black waves rise  
At once, and fling the sea-weed to the shore, —

Thus were the Achaians troubled in their hearts.

Atrides, deeply grieving, walked the camp, 10  
And bade the clear-voiced heralds call by name  
To council all the chiefs, but not aloud.  
The king himself among the foremost gave  
The summons. Sadly that assembly took  
Their seats ; and Agamemnon in the midst 15  
Rose, shedding tears, — as down a lofty rock,  
Darkening its face, a fountain's waters flow, —  
And, deeply sighing, thus addressed the Greeks :—

“ O friends ! the chiefs and princes of the Greeks !  
Saturnian Jove hath in an evil snare 20  
Most cruelly entangled me. He gave  
His promise once that I should overthrow  
This strong-walled Ilium, and return ; but now  
He meditates a fraud, and sends me back  
To Argos without glory, and with loss 25  
Of many warriors. Thus doth it seem good  
Doubtless to Jove Almighty, who hath cast  
The towers of many a city down to earth,  
And will cast others down, — his might excels  
All other might. But let us now obey, 30  
As I shall counsel you, and in our ships  
Haste to our own dear country ; for I see  
That Troy with its broad streets can ne'er be ours.”

He spake ; and all were silent. Silent long  
Remained the sorrow-stricken sons of Greece, 35  
Till Diomed, the brave in battle, spake :—

“ First of the chiefs I speak, to disapprove,

Atrides, thy rash purpose : 't is my right  
 In council ; nor, O king, be thou displeased.  
 Thou first among the Greeks hast taunted me 40  
 With lack of valor, calling me unapt  
 For war and weak of arm. The young and old  
 Have heard the taunt. One of two gifts the son  
 Of wily Saturn hath bestowed on thee :  
 High rank and rule o'er all the rest he gave, 45  
 But gave thee not the nobler quality  
 Of fortitude. Dost thou then truly deem  
 The Greeks unapt for war and weak of arm,  
 As thou hast said ? Thou longest to return :  
 Go, then ; the way is open ; by the sea 50  
 The barks that brought thee from Mycenæ lie,  
 A numerous fleet. Yet others will remain —  
 Long-haired Achæians — till we overthrow  
 The city. Should they also pine for home,  
 Then let them flee, with all their ships ; while I 55  
 With Sthenelus fight on until we make  
 An end of Troy, — for with the gods we came."

He spake. The Greeks applauded ; all admired  
 The words of the horse-tamer Diomed.

Nestor the knight then rose, and thus he spake :—

"O son of Tydeus, eminently brave 60  
 Art thou among thy comrades in the field,  
 And great in council. No one here condemns  
 The sentence thou hast given ; among the Greeks  
 Is no one who denies what thou hast said ; 65  
 Yet hast thou not said all. Thy years are few, --

So few, thou mightest be my youngest son ;  
And yet thou speakest wisely to the kings  
Of Greece, and thy discourse is just and right.  
Now I, who boast of far more years than thou, 70  
Will speak of this that yet remains, and none —  
Not even Agamemnon — will gainsay  
What I advise. A wretch without a tie  
Of kin, a lawless man without a home,  
Is he who takes delight in civil strifes. 75  
But let us now give way to the dark night,  
And make our banquets ready. Let the guards  
Lie down within the trenches which we digged  
Without the wall : be this the young men's charge.  
And thou, Atrides, do thou now begin, 80  
Who art supreme, and make a feast for all  
The elder chiefs ; it shall become thee well :  
Thy tents are full of wine, which ships from Thrace  
Bring every day across the mighty deep,  
And thou hast all things ready, and a host 85  
Of menials. Then, when many throng the board,  
Thou shalt defer to him who counsels thee  
Most wisely ; for the Greeks have urgent need  
Of prudent counsels, when the foe so close  
Beside our galleys lights his multitude 90  
Of watch-fires. Who that sees them can rejoice ?  
This night will rescue or destroy our host."

He spake. They listened all, and willingly  
Obeyed him. Forth in armor went the guards,  
Led by the chieftain Thrasymedes, son 95

Of Nestor, by Ascalaphus, who claimed  
His birth from Mars, and by Ialmenus  
His brother, and Deïpyrus, with whom  
There followed Aphareus, Meriones,  
And Lycomedes, Creon's noble son. 100

Seven were the leaders of the guards ; with each  
A hundred youths in warlike order marched,  
Bearing long spears ; and when they reached the  
space

Between the trench and wall they sat them down,  
And kindled fires and made their evening meal. 105

Atrides brought the assembled elder chiefs  
To his pavilion, and before them set  
A generous banquet. They put forth their hands  
And shared the feast ; and when the calls of thirst  
And hunger ceased, the aged Nestor first 110  
Began to counsel them ; the chief, whose words  
Had lately seemed of wisest import, now  
Addressed the assembly with well-ordered speech —

“ Atrides Agamemnon, glorious king !  
What I shall say begins and ends with thee, 115  
For thou dost rule o'er many nations. Jove  
Hath given to thee the sceptre, and the power  
To make their laws, that thou mayst seek their good.  
Thou, therefore, of all men, shouldst speak and hear  
In council, and shouldst follow willingly 120  
Another's judgment when it best promotes  
The general weal ; for all depends on thee.  
Now let me say what seems to me most wise ;

For better counsel none can give than this  
 Which now I meditate, and which to give 125  
 I purposed from the hour when thou, great king,  
 Didst bear the maid Briseis from the tent  
 Of the enraged Achilles, unapproved  
 By me, who strove to change thy rash design.  
 Then didst thou yield thee to thy haughty will, 130  
 And didst dishonor a most valiant man,  
 Whom the immortals honor. Thou didst take  
 And still dost keep the prize he fairly won.  
 Let it be now our study to appease  
 The hero with large gifts and soothing words." 135

Then Agamemnon, king of men, replied : —  
 "O ancient man, most truly hast thou named  
 My faults. I erred, and I deny it not.  
 That man indeed is equal to a host  
 Whom Jupiter doth love and honor thus, 140  
 Humbling the Achaian people for his sake.  
 And now, since, yielding to my wayward mood  
 I erred, let me appease him, if I may,  
 With gifts of priceless worth. Before you all  
 I number them, — seven tripods which the fire 145  
 Hath never touched, six talents of pure gold,  
 And twenty shining caldrons, and twelve steeds  
 Of hardy frame, victorious in the race,  
 Whose feet have won me prizes in the games.  
 No beggar would he be, nor yet with store 150  
 Of gold unfurnished, in whose coffers lay  
 The prizes those swift steeds have brought to me.

Seven faultless women, skilled in household arts,  
 I give moreover, — Lesbians, whom I chose  
 When he o'erran the populous Lesbian isle, — 155  
 Damsels in beauty who excel their sex.  
 These I bestow, and with them I will send  
 Her whom I took away, — Briseis, pure —  
 I swear it with a mighty oath — as pure  
 As when she left his tent. All these I give 160  
 At once ; and if by favor of the gods  
 We lay the mighty city of Priam waste,  
 He shall load down his galley with large store  
 Of gold and silver, entering first when we,  
 The Greeks, divide the spoil. Then may he choose  
 Twice ten young Trojan women, beautiful 166  
 Beyond their sex save Helen. If we come  
 Safe to Achaian Argos, richly stocked  
 With milky kine, he may become to me  
 A son-in-law, and cherished equally 170  
 With my sole son Orestes, who is reared  
 Most royally. Three daughters there, within  
 My stately palace-walls, — Chrysothemis,  
 Laodice, and Iphianassa, — dwell,  
 And he may choose among them, and may lead 175  
 Home to the house of Peleus her who best  
 Deserves his love. Nor need he to endow  
 The bride, for I will give an ampler dower  
 Than ever father to his daughter gave, —  
 Seven cities with thronged streets, — Cardamyle, 180  
 Enope, grassy Hira, Pheræ famed

Afar, Antheia with rich pasture-fields,  
 Æpeia beautiful, and Pedasus  
 With all its vineyards ; all are near the sea,  
 And stand the last before you reach the coast 185  
 Of sandy Pylos. Rich in flocks and herds  
 Their dwellers are, and they will honor him  
 As if he were a god, and, ruled by him,  
 Will pay large tribute. These will I bestow,  
 Let but his anger cool and his resolve 190  
 Give way. 'T is Pluto who is deaf to prayer  
 And ne'er relents, and he, of all the gods,  
 Most hateful is to men. Now let the son  
 Of Peleus yield at length to me, who stand  
 Above him in authority and years." 195

Then answered Nestor the Gerenian knight : —  
 "Atrides Agamemnon ! glorious king !  
 Gifts not to be contemned thou offerest  
 To Prince Achilles. Let us now despatch  
 A chosen embassy, who shall proceed 200  
 At once to where Pelides holds his tent.  
 I name the men ; and cheerfully will they  
 Perform the duty : Phœnix, dear to Jove,  
 Shall be their leader, mighty Ajax next,  
 And then high-born Ulysses ; heralds twain 205  
 Shall follow, — Hodius\*and Eurybates.  
 And now be water brought to cleanse our hands,  
 And charge be given that no ill-omened word  
 Be uttered, while we pray that Jupiter,  
 The son of Saturn, will assist our need." 210

He spake ; and all approved the words he said.  
Then poured the heralds water on the hands  
Of those who sat. The young men crowned with wine  
The goblets, and in seemly order passed  
The brimming cups, distributing to each. 215  
Part to the gods they poured, and next they drank  
As each might choose, and then the embassy  
Hastened from Agamemnon's tent. To each  
Gerenian Nestor spake in turn, and fixed  
His eyes on each intently, — most of all 220  
Upon Ulysses, — and with many a charge  
To turn Pelides from his angry mood.  
Along the edge of the resounding deep  
They went, and as they walked they offered prayer  
To earth-embracing Neptune, that their words 225  
Might move the great soul of Æacides.  
And now they came where lay the Myrmidons  
Among their tents and ships. Achilles there  
Drew solace from the music of a harp  
Sweet-toned and shapely, in a silver frame, 230  
Part of the spoil he took when he o'erthrew  
Eëtion's town. To soothe his mood he sang  
The deeds of heroes. By him sat alone  
Patroclus, silent till the song should cease.  
On moved the messengers, — before them walked  
High-born Ulysses, — till they stood beside 235  
Achilles. He beheld, and with the harp  
Sprang from his seat, surprised. Patroclus saw  
The heroes also, and arose. Their hands

The swift Achilles took in his, and said : — 240

“ Welcome ! Ye come as friends. Some press-  
ing cause

Must surely bring you hither, whom I prize,  
Wronged as I am, beyond all other Greeks.”

Thus speaking, the great son of Peleus led  
His guests still farther on, and seated them 245  
On couches spread with purple coverings,  
And thus addressed Patroclus, who was near : —

“ Son of Menœtius, bring a larger vase,  
And mingle purer wine, and place a cup  
For each, since these are most beloved friends, — 250  
These warriors who now sit beneath my roof.”

He spake. Patroclus hearkened, and obeyed  
His well-beloved friend, who meantime placed  
A block beside the fire, and on it laid  
Chines of a sheep and of a fatling goat, 255  
And of a sow, the fattest of her kind.  
Automedon stood by and held them fast ;  
Achilles took the knife and skilfully  
Carved them in portions, and transfixed the parts  
With spits. Patroclus, the divine in form, 260  
Woke to a blaze the fire ; and when the flame  
Had ceased to rise he raked the glowing coals  
Apart, and o’er them stretched the spits, and  
strewed,

Raising the flesh, the sacred salt o’er all.  
And when he had made ready and had spread 265  
The banquet on the board, Patroclus took

The bread and offered it to all the guests  
In shapely canisters. Achilles served  
The meats, and took his seat against the wall,  
In front of great Ulysses. There he bade 270  
His friend Patroclus offer sacrifice,  
Casting the first rich morsels to the flames.  
The guests put forth their hands and shared the  
feast ;

And when the calls of hunger and of thirst  
Were felt no longer, Ajax gave a nod 275  
To Phoenix, which divine Ulysses saw,  
And filled his cup and drank to Peleus' son : —

“ Thy health, Achilles ! Princely feasts like this  
Attend us both in Agamemnon's tent  
And here, — for here is all that makes a feast 280  
Complete ; yet now is not the time to think  
Of pleasant banquets, for our thoughts are turned —  
O Jove-born warrior ! — to a fearful time  
Of slaughter, and the fate of our good ships, —  
Whether we save them harmless, or the foe 285  
Destroy them, if thou put not on thy might.  
For now the haughty Trojans, and the troops  
Who come from far to aid them, pitch their camp  
Close to our fleet and wall, and all around  
Kindle their many fires, and boast that we 290  
No longer have the power to drive them back  
From our black galleys. Jupiter, the son  
Of Saturn, shows them favorable signs  
With lightnings from above ; and, terrible

In aspect and in valor, Hector makes 295  
 Sad havoc, trusting in the aid of Jove,  
 And neither reverences gods nor men, —  
 Such rage possesses him. He prays that soon  
 The morn may rise, that he may hew the prow  
 From all our ships and give them to the flames, 300  
 And slay the Greeks, bewildered with the smoke.  
 For me, I greatly fear the gods will grant  
 That he fulfil his threat, and that our doom  
 Will be to perish on the Trojan coast,  
 And far away from Argos, famed for steeds. 305  
 Rise, then, though late, — rise with a resolute mind,  
 And from the hard-pressed sons of Greece drive back  
 The assailing Trojans. Thou wilt else lament  
 Hereafter, when the evil shall be done  
 And shall admit no cure. Bethink thee well 310  
 How from the Greeks thou mayst avert the day  
 Of their destruction. O my friend, when first  
 He sent thee forth to Agamemnon's help  
 From Phthia's coast, thy father Peleus said : —  
 “ ‘ My child, from Juno and Minerva comes 315  
 The gift of valor, if they choose to give.  
 But curb thou the high spirit in thy breast,  
 For gentle ways are best, and keep aloof  
 From sharp contentions, that the old and young  
 Among the Greeks may honor thee the more.’ 320  
 “ Such was the old man's charge, forgotten now.  
 Yield, then, and lay thy wrath aside. Large gifts  
 Doth Agamemnon offer, to appease

Thy wounded spirit. Hear me, if thou wilt,  
Recount what gifts the monarch in his tent 325  
Hath promised thee : — Seven tripods which the fire  
Hath never touched ; six talents of pure gold ;  
And twenty shining caldrons ; and twelve steeds  
Of hardy frame, victorious in the race,  
Whose feet have won him prizes in the games. 330  
No beggar would he be, nor yet with store  
Of gold unfurnished, in whose coffers lay  
The prizes those swift-footed steeds have won.  
Seven faultless women, skilled in household arts,  
He offers, — Lesbians, whom he chose when thou  
Didst overrun the populous Lesbian isle, — 336  
In beauty eminent among their sex.  
These he bestows, and with them he will send  
Her whom he took away, — Briseis, pure —  
He swears it with a mighty oath — as pure 340  
As when she left thy tent. All these he gives  
At once ; and if, by favor of the gods,  
We lay the mighty city of Priam waste,  
Thou shalt load down thy galley with large store  
Of gold and silver, entering first when we, 345  
The Greeks, divide the spoil. Then mayst thou  
choose  
Twice ten young Trojan women, beautiful  
Beyond their sex save Helen. If we come  
Safe to Achaian Argos, richly stocked  
With milky kine, thou mayst become to him 350  
A son-in-law, and cherished equally

With his sole son Orestes, who is reared  
 Right royally. Three daughters there, within  
 The monarch's stately halls, — Chrysothemis,  
 Laodice, and Iphianassa, — dwell, 355  
 And thou mayst choose among them, and mayst  
 lead

Home to the house of Peleus her who best  
 Deserves thy love. Nor needest thou endow  
 The bride, for he will give an ampler dower  
 Than ever father to his daughter gave, — 360  
 Seven cities with thronged streets, — Cardamyle,  
 Enope, grassy Hira, Pheræ famed  
 Afar, Antheia with rich pasture-grounds,  
 Æpeia beautiful, and Pedasus  
 With all its vineyards ; all are near the sea, 365  
 And stand the last before you reach the coast  
 Of sandy Pylos. Rich in flocks and herds  
 Their dwellers are, and they will honor thee  
 As if thou wert a god, and, ruled by thee,  
 Will pay large tribute. These will he bestow, 370  
 Let but thine anger cease. But if the son  
 Of Atreus and his gifts still move thy hate,  
 At least have pity on the afflicted Greeks,  
 Pent in their camp, who now would honor thee  
 As if thou wert a god ; and thou shalt gain 375  
 Great glory as their champion, and shalt slay  
 This Hector, who even now is close at hand,  
 And in a murderous frenzy makes his boast  
 That none of all the chieftains whom the fleet

Of Greece brought hither equals him in might." 380

The swift Achilles answered him and said :—

"Son of Laertes, nobly born, and versed

In wise devices, let me frankly speak

Just as I think, and just as I shall act,

And then ye will not importune me more. 385

Hateful to me, as are the gates of hell,

Is he who, hiding one thing in his heart,

Utters another. I shall speak as seems

To me the best ; nor deem I that the son

Of Atreus or the other Greeks can move 390

My settled purpose, since no thanks are paid

To him who with the enemy maintains

A constant battle : equal is the meed

Of him who stands aloof and him who fights

Manfully ; both the coward and the brave 395

Are held in equal honor, and they die

An equal death, — the idler and the man

Of mighty deeds. For me there is no store

Of wealth laid up from all that I have borne,

Exposing life in battle. As a bird 400

Brings to her unfledged young the food she finds,

Though she herself be fasting, so have I

Had many a night unvisited by sleep,

And passed in combat many a bloody day,

Fighting beside these warriors for their wives. 405

Twelve cities have I with my fleet laid waste,

And with my Myrmidons have I o'erthrown

Eleven upon this fertile Trojan coast.

Full many a precious spoil from these I bore,  
And to Atrides Agamemnon gave. 420  
He, loitering in his fleet, received them all ;  
Few he distributed, and many kept.  
To chiefs and princes he indeed assigned  
Prizes, which now they hold. From me alone  
Of all the Greeks he takes my prize ; he takes 425  
My bride, whom well I loved ; — and let him keep  
The damsel. But what need is there that Greeks  
Wage war against the Trojans ? For what cause  
Did Agamemnon, gathering from our realms  
An army, lead it hither ? Was it not 430  
Because of fair-haired Helen ? Are the sons  
Of Atreus, then, the only men on earth  
Who love their wives ? Nay, every good man loves  
And cherishes his spouse ; and mine I loved  
Tenderly, though the captive of my spear : 435  
And now, since he hath taken my reward  
Away and treacherously dealt with me,  
Let him not try again, for I am warned,  
And he will not persuade me. Let him take  
Counsel with thee, Ulysses, and the rest, 440  
How to drive back the enemy and save  
The fleet from flames. Already has he done  
Much without me ; a rampart he has raised,  
And round it dug a deep, broad trench, and filled  
The trench with palisades. Yet can he not 445  
Resist the man-destroyer Hector thus.  
This Hector, when I fought among the Greeks,

Never would fight at distance from the walls,  
And ventured not beyond the Scæan gates  
And beechen tree. There waited he for me 440  
Upon a time, and scarce escaped with life  
From my assault. Now, since I do not choose  
To fight with noble Hector, I shall pay,  
To-morrow, sacrifice to Jupiter  
And all the gods, and load my galleys well, 445  
And draw them to the water. Then shalt thou  
See — if thou care for such a sight — my ships  
Sailing upon the fishy Hellespont  
At early morning, with their crews on board  
Eager to pull the oar ; and if the god 450  
Of ocean grant a prosperous voyage, then  
On the third day we reach the fertile coast  
Of Phthia. Large possessions left I there  
When I came hither in an evil hour ;  
And thither I shall carry with me gold 455  
And ruddy brass, and women of fair forms,  
And burnished steel, — the spoils I won in war.  
The prize he gave me, Agamemnon, son  
Of Atreus, takes, with many insults, back.  
Bear him this message, — give it openly, 460  
That others of the Greeks may be like me  
Indignant should he impudently dare  
To wrong them also : — Let him ne'er again,  
Though shameless, dare to look me in the face.  
I will not join in council or in act 465  
With him : he has deceived and wronged me once,

And now he cannot wheedle me with words.  
Let once suffice. I leave him to himself,  
To perish. All-providing Jupiter  
Hath made him mad. I hate his gifts ; I hold 470  
In utter scorn the giver. Were his gifts  
Tenfold — nay, twenty-fold — the worth of all  
That he possesses, and with added wealth  
From others, — all the riches that flow in  
Upon Orchomenus, or Thebes, the pride 475  
Of Egypt, where large treasures are laid up,  
And through whose hundred gates rush men and  
steeds,  
Two hundred through each gate ; — nay, should he  
give  
As many gifts as there are sands and dust  
Of earth, — not even then shall Atreus' son 480  
Persuade me, till I reap a just revenge  
For his foul contumelies. I will wed  
No child of Agamemnon Even though  
She vied with golden Venus in her charms,  
And with the blue-eyed Pallas in her skill, 485  
I would not wed her. Let him choose among  
The Greeks a fitter husband, — one whose ruin  
Is wider than my own. For if the gods  
Preserve me, and I reach my home again,  
My father, Peleus, will bestow on me 490  
A consort. Many are the Achaian maids,  
Daughters of chiefs who hold our citadels  
In Hellas, and in Phthia, and of these,

Her who shall most delight me I will make  
My well-beloved wife. My soul has longed 495  
Earnestly, with a fitting spouse betrothed  
Duly, to make my dwelling there, and there  
Enjoy the wealth which aged Peleus won ;  
For not to be compared with life is all  
The wealth which, as men say, was treasured up 500  
In Ilium's populous town in time of peace,  
Ere the Greeks came, nor all the stores contained  
Within the stony threshold of the god  
Who bears the bow, Apollo, on the coast  
Of rocky Pytho. We may gather spoil 505  
Of oxen and of fatling sheep, and bring  
Tripods from war, and yellow-manèd steeds :  
The breath of man no force can seize or hold,  
And when it leaves the enclosure of the teeth  
It comes not back. My mother said to me — 510  
The goddess, silver-footed Thetis, said —  
A twofold fate conducts me to my death ; —  
If I remain to fight beneath the walls  
Of Ilium, my return will be cut off,  
But deathless my renown ; if I return 515  
To the dear land in which my fathers dwell,  
My glory will be nought, but long my life,  
And late will come to me the stroke of death.  
And now I counsel all to sail for home,  
For never will ye see the overthrow 520  
Of lofty Ilium. Jove the Thunderer  
Stretches his great hand o'er her, and her sons

Take courage. Go ye now, and take with you  
 This message to the princes of the Greeks, —  
 As is the office of an embassy, — 525  
 And bid them meditate some wiser plan  
 To save their galleys and the host of Greeks  
 Within the hollow barks. The plan which brought  
 You hither cannot serve you while I keep  
 My anger unappeased. Let Phœnix stay 530  
 To pass the night with us, that he may sail  
 To-morrow, if it please him, to the land  
 We love ; I take him not against his will.”

He ceased ; and silent were the ambassadors,  
 Astonished at his passionate words. At last 535  
 Phœnix, the aged knight, with many tears  
 And sighs, took up the word, in grief and fear  
 Lest Hector should destroy the Grecian fleet : —

“ Illustrious son of Peleus, if indeed  
 Thou wilt return, nor carest to repel 540  
 From our swift galleys the consuming fire,  
 Because thou art offended, how shall I,  
 Dear child, remain without thee ? When at first  
 Peleus, the aged knight, from Phthia sent  
 Thee, yet a boy, to Agamemnon’s aid, 545  
 Unskilled as then thou wert in cruel war  
 And martial councils, — where men also gain  
 A great renown, — he sent me with thee, charged  
 To teach thee both, that so thou mightst become  
 In words an orator, in warlike deeds 550  
 An actor. Therefore, my beloved child,

Not willingly shall I remain behind ;  
Not even though a god should promise me  
That, overcoming the decays of age,  
I might become a beardless youth again, 555  
As when from Hellas and its companies  
Of lovely maids I came a fugitive,  
And left Amyntor, son of Ormenus, —  
My father, — angry with me for the sake  
Of a fair-tressèd wanton, whom he loved, 560  
Treating my mother basely. To my knees  
My mother came and prayed me ceaselessly,  
First, to possess the woman, that she then  
Might loathe the elder one ; and I obeyed.  
My father knew it, and with many a curse 565  
Invoked the hateful furies to forbid  
That any child who owed his birth to me  
Should ever sit upon his knees. The gods —  
The Jove of Hades and dread Proserpine —  
Confirmed his curse. To slay him with the sword 570  
Was my first thought. Some god subdued my wrath,  
Reminding me of what the public voice  
Would say, and infamy that would ensue, —  
Lest I among the Achaians should be called  
A parricide. I could not brook to dwell 575  
Within my father's palace while he thus  
Was wroth with me. My kindred and my friends  
Came round me, and besought me to remain,  
And stayed beside me. Many a fatling ewe  
And many a slow-paced ox with curving horns

They slew, and many a fattened swine they stretched  
 Over the flame of Vulcan. From the casks  
 Of the old chief his wine was freely drawn.  
 Nine nights they slept surrounding me, while each  
 Kept watch in turn : nor ever were the fires 585  
 Put out ; one blazed beneath the portico  
 Of the fair hall, and near the chamber-door  
 Another glimmered in the vestibule.  
 But when upon me rose the tenth dark night,  
 I broke my aptly-jointed chamber-doors, 590  
 And issued forth, and easily o'erleaped  
 The wall around the palace, quite unseen  
 Of watching men and of the serving maids.  
 I fled through spacious Hellas to the fields  
 Of Phthia, nurse of flocks, and to her king, 595  
 Peleus, who kindly welcomed me, and loved  
 Me as a father loves his only son,  
 Born to large wealth in his declining years.  
 He made me rich, and gave me sovereign rule  
 Over much people. My abode was fixed 600  
 In farthest Phthia, where I was the prince  
 Of the Dolopians. As for thee, my care,  
 Godlike Achilles, made thee what thou art.  
 I loved thee from my soul : thou wouldst not go  
 With any other to the feast, nor take 605  
 Thy food at home until upon my knees  
 I placed thee, carved thy meats, and gave them thee,  
 And poured thy wine. The tunic on my breast  
 Was often wetted by thee when the wine

Gushed in thy petulant childhood from thy lips. 610  
Thus many things did I endure for thee,  
And many toils perform ; and since the gods  
Vouchsafed no son to me, it was my thought  
To train thee as a son, that thou mightst be,  
O godlike man ! the bulwark of my age. 615  
And now subdue that mighty spirit of thine :  
Ill it becomes thee to be merciless :  
The gods themselves are placable, though far  
Above us all in honor and in power  
And virtue. We propitiate them with vows, 620  
Incense, libations, and burnt-offerings,  
And prayers for those who have offended. Prayers  
Are daughters of almighty Jupiter, —  
Lame, wrinkled, and squint-eyed, — that painfully  
Follow Misfortune's steps ; but strong of limb 625  
And swift of foot Misfortune is, and, far  
Outstripping all, comes first to every land,  
And there wreaks evil on mankind, which prayers  
Do afterwards redress. Whoe'er receives  
Jove's daughters reverently when they approach, 630  
Him willingly they aid, and to his suit  
They listen. Whosoever puts them by  
With obstinate denial, they appeal  
To Jove, the son of Saturn, and entreat  
That he will cause Misfortune to attend 635  
The offender's way in life, that he in turn  
May suffer evil and be punished thus.  
Wherefore, Achilles ! do thou also yield

The honor due Jove's daughters, freely given  
By other valiant men. If Atreus' son 640  
Brought thee no gifts, nor promised others still,  
But kept his anger, I would never ask  
That thou shouldst lay aside thy wrath and come  
To help the Argives in their bitter need.  
But he bestows large gifts, and adds a pledge 645  
Of others yet in store, and he hath sent  
The best men of the army, who to thee  
Are dearest, to entreat thee. Spurn thou not  
These, nor their embassy, although at first  
Thine anger was not causeless. We have heard 650  
The praise of heroes of the elder time,  
Inflamed to vehement anger, yet appeased  
By gifts, and yielding to persuasive words.  
One instance I remember : long ago  
It happened, and I will relate it here 655  
Among my friends. Around the city-walls  
Of Calydon did the Curetes strive  
In battle with the Ætolians ; they destroyed  
Each other fearfully. The Ætolians fought  
To save the pleasant town of Calydon, 660  
And the Curetes warred to lay it waste.  
Diana of the golden throne had caused  
The war, displeased with Ceneus, who withheld  
From her the first-fruits of his fertile field :  
While hecatombs were burnt in sacrifice 665  
To feast the other gods, to her alone —  
Daughter of Jove — no offering was brought ;

For either he forgot, or thought the rite  
Of little moment ; but he greatly erred.  
And now the child of Jove, the archer-queen, 670  
Incensed, sent forth against him from the wood  
A white-tusked wild boar, which upon his lands  
Entered, and ravaged them, and brought to earth  
Many tall trees : tree after tree they fell,  
With roots uptorn, and all the blossoms on, 75  
That promised fruit. Him Meleager, son  
Of CENEUS, slew, with many hunters called  
From neighboring cities, bringing many hounds.  
A few could not subdue him : he had made  
Many already mount the funeral pile. 680  
Diana kindled round the boar a strife  
For the beast's head and bristly hide, — a war  
'Twixt the Curetes and the Ætolian band  
Of braves. The war, while Meleager fought,  
Went not with the Curetes, nor could they, 685  
Though many, keep the field. But wrath at last  
Seized Meleager, — wrath, which rages oft  
Even in prudent minds. Incensed against  
Althæa, his own mother, he remained  
At home with Cleopatra, his young wife, 690  
The beauteous, whom a delicate-footed dame,  
Marpessa, daughter of Evenus, bore  
To Idas, bravest in his time among  
The sons of men, — so brave that once he drew  
A bow against Apollo for the sake 695  
Of his neat-footed bride. The honored pair

Within the palace used to call their child  
 Alcione ; for when the archer-god,  
 Apollo, from her husband bore away  
 The mother, Cleopatra sadly wailed, 700  
 As wails the halcyon. So beside his spouse  
 Dwelt Meleager, brooding ever o'er  
 The violent anger which his mother's curse  
 Had kindled. Grieving for a brother's death,  
 She supplicated heaven, and often struck 705  
 Her hands against the teeming earth, and called—  
 Kneeling, her bosom all bedewed with tears—  
 On Pluto and the cruel Proserpine,  
 To put her son to death. From Erebus  
 The pitiless Erinnys, wandering 710  
 In darkness, heard the prayer. Then straightway  
rose

A sound of fearful tumult at the gates :  
 The towers were battered, and the elder chiefs  
 Of the Ætolians hastened to entreat  
 The aid of Meleager, and they sent 715  
 Priests of the gods, a chosen band, to pray  
 That he would come to their defence. Large gifts  
 They promised. Where the soil of Calydon  
 Was best, they bade him choose a fruitful field  
 Of fifty acres, half for vines, and half, 720  
 Cleared of the trees, for tillage. Earnestly  
 Did aged Æneus, famed for horsemanship,  
 Beseech him ; to the chamber of his son,  
 High-roofed, he climbed, and at the threshold shook

The massive doors with knocking as he sued. 725  
His sisters and his reverend mother joined  
Their supplications : he resisted still.  
And much his friends, the dearest and most prized,  
Besought him, but they vainly strove to swerve  
His steadfast mind, till his own chamber felt 730  
The assault, and the Curetes climbed the walls  
To fire the populous city. Then the nymph,  
His graceful wife, entreated him with tears,  
And spake of all the horrors which o’ertake  
A captured city, — all the men cut off 735  
By massacre, the houses given to flames,  
The children and deep-bosomed women dragged  
Into captivity. Her sorrowful words  
He heard ; his spirit was disturbed ; he went  
To gird his glittering armor on, and thus  
He saved the Ætolians from a fearful doom,  
Obeying his own impulse. The reward  
Of rare and costly gifts they gave him not,  
Though thus he rescued them. Be not thy thought  
Like his, my friend ; let no invisible power 745  
Persuade thee thus to act. Far worse it were  
To wait, and when our fleet is all on fire  
Offer thy aid. Accept the gifts at once :  
Then will the Greeks, as if thou wert a god,  
Hold thee in honor. If without the gifts 750  
Thou enter later on the field of fight,  
Thou wilt not have like honor with the host,  
Although thou turn the assault of battle back.”

Then did Achilles, swift of foot, reply : —  
 “O ancient Phœnix, father, loved of Jove,  
 Such honor need I not ; for the decree  
 Of Jove, I deem, already honors me,  
 And will detain me by my beakèd ships  
 While breath is in my lungs, and I have power  
 To move these knees. Yet one thing I would say, —  
 And bear it thou in mind, — vex not my soul 761  
 With weeping and lamenting for the sake  
 Of Agamemnon ; it becomes thee not —  
 Thou who art loved by me — to yield thy love  
 To him, unless thou wouldst incur my hate. 765  
 And thou shouldst be the enemy of him  
 Who wrongs me. Reign thou equally with me,  
 And share my honors. These will carry back  
 My answer. Thou remain, and, softly couched,  
 Sleep here : with early morn will we consult 770  
 Whether to leave this region or remain.”

He spake, and, nodding to Patroclus, gave  
 A signal to prepare an ample couch  
 For Phoenix, while the other chiefs prepared  
 To leave the tent. Then Ajax Telamon, 775  
 The godlike chief, addressed his comrades thus : —

“Son of Laertes, nobly born, and skilled  
 In sage devices, let us now depart,  
 Since, as it seems, the end for which we came  
 Cannot be compassed thus, and we must bear 780  
 With speed the unwelcome answer to the Greeks,  
 Who sit expecting us ; while in his breast

The implacable Achilles bears a fierce  
 And haughty heart, nor doth he heed the claim  
 Of that close friendship of his fellow-chiefs, 785  
 Which at the Grecian fleet exalted him  
 Above all others. Unrelenting one !  
 Even for a brother's death a price is paid,  
 Or when a son is slain : the slayer dwells  
 At home among his people, having made 790  
 The appointed expiation. He to whom  
 The fine is offered takes it, and his thirst  
 Of vengeance is appeased. But in thy heart  
 The gods have kindled an unquenchable rage,  
 All for a single damsel, — and behold, 795  
 Seven more we offer, passing beautiful,  
 With many gifts beside. Let, then, thy mood  
 Be softened : have respect to thine own roof ;  
 For we are guests beneath it, sent from all  
 The assembled host, and strong is our desire 800  
 To be thy dearest and most cherished friends  
 Of all the Achaians, many as they are."

Achilles the swift-footed answered thus : —  
 " Illustrious Ajax, son of Telamon,  
 Prince of the people ! all that thou hast said, 805  
 I well perceive, is prompted by thy heart.  
 Mine swells with indignation when I think  
 How King Atrides mid the assembled Greeks  
 Heaped insults on me, as if I had been  
 A wretched vagabond. But go ye now 810  
 And bear my message. I shall never think

Of bloody war till noble Hector, son  
 Of Priam, slaughtering in his way the Greeks,  
 Shall reach the galleys of the Myrmidons,  
 To lay the fleet in flames. But when he comes 815  
 To my own tent and galley, he, I think,  
 Though eager for the combat, will desist."

He spake. Each raised a double cup and poured  
 Libations to the gods ; they then returned  
 Beside the fleet. Ulysses led the way. 820

Patroclus bade the attendant men and maids  
 Strew with all speed a soft and ample bed  
 For Phoenix. They obeyed, and spread the couch  
 With skins of sheep, dyed coverlets, and sheets  
 Of lawn ; and there the old man lay to wait 825  
 The glorious morn. Meantime Achilles slept  
 Within the tent's recess, and by him lay  
 Phorbas's daughter, whom he carried off  
 From Lesbos, — Diomedè, rosy-cheeked.  
 Upon the other side Patroclus lay, 830  
 With slender-waisted Iphis by his side,  
 Given by the great Achilles when he took  
 Scyros the tall, where Enyëus ruled.

Now when the ambassadors were come within  
 The tent of Agamemnon, all the chiefs 835  
 Rose, one by one, and, lifting up to them  
 Their golden goblets, asked the news they brought  
 And first Atrides, king of men, inquired : —

" Renowned Ulysses, glory of the Greeks !  
 Tell me, will he protect our fleet from flames, 840

Or does he, in his wrath and pride, refuse?"

Then spake the hardy chief Ulysses thus : —

“ Atrides Agamemnon, glorious king  
Of men ! he will not let his wrath abate,  
But rages yet more fiercely, and contemns 845  
Thee and thy gifts. He leaves thee to consult  
With thine Achaians by what means to save  
The fleet and army ; for himself he means  
To-morrow, with the early dawn, to launch  
His well-appointed galleys on the sea, 850  
And will advise the other Greeks to spread  
The sails for home, since they will never see  
The overthrow of lofty Troy, for Jove  
The Thunderer stretches his protecting hand  
Above her, and her sons have taken heart. 855  
Such are his words ; and those who went with me  
Are present, — Ajax and the heralds both,  
Sage men, — the witnesses to what I say.  
The aged Phoenix stays behind to sleep,  
And on the morrow to attend his chief 860  
To their beloved country, — if he will,  
For else by no means will he take him hence.”

He spake ; and all were silent, all amazed  
At what they heard, for these were bitter words.  
Long sat the sons of Greece in silent thought, 865  
Till Diomed, the great in battle, spake : —

“ Atrides Agamemnon, glorious king  
Of men ! I would thou hadst not deigned to ask  
The illustrious son of Peleus for his aid,

With offer of large gifts ; for arrogant 870  
 He is at all times : thou hast made him now  
 More insolent. Now leave him to himself,  
 To go or to remain : he yet will fight  
 When his mood changes, or some god within  
 Shall move him. Let us do what I advise : — 875  
 Betake we all ourselves to rest, but first  
 Refresh ourselves with food and wine ; in them  
 Is strength and spirit. When the rosy morn  
 Shall shine, command thou that the foot and horse  
 Be speedily drawn up before the fleet, 880  
 And thou encourage them with cheerful words,  
 And fight among them in the foremost rank.”

He spake. The kings assented, and admired  
 The words of the horse-tamer Diomed ;  
 And, pouring out libations, to their tents 885  
 They all departed, and lay down to rest,  
 And took into their souls the balm of sleep.

## BOOK X.

ALL the night long the captains of the Greeks  
 Slept at the ships, and pleasant was their  
 sleep, —

Save only Agamemnon, Atreus' son,  
 The shepherd of the people. Not to him —  
 Vexed with a thousand cares — came gentle sleep.

As when the husband of the light-haired queen      6  
Of heaven sends forth his thunders, ushering in  
Some wide-involving shower, — rain, hail, or snow  
Whitening the fields, — or opening o'er some land  
The ravenous jaws of unrelenting war, —      10  
So frequent were the groans which from his heart  
Atrides uttered ; for within his breast  
His heart was troubled. Looking toward the plain  
Of Troy, he wondered at the many fires  
Blazing before the city, and the sound      15  
Of flutes and fifes, and tumult of the crowd.  
But when he turned him toward the fleet and host  
Of Greece, he tore his hair, and flung it up  
To Jove, and vented his great heart in groans.  
And now at length it seemed to him most wise      20  
To seek Neleian Nestor, and with him  
Devise some plan by which to turn aside  
The threatened evil from the Greeks. He rose,  
And drew his tunic o'er his breast, and laced  
The graceful sandals to his well-shaped feet ;      25  
And o'er his shoulders threw the blood-stained hide  
Of a huge tawny lion, that reached down  
Even to the ground ; and took in hand his spear.  
Meantime with like uneasy thoughts oppressed  
Was Menelaus, to whose eyes there came      30  
No slumber, — dreading lest calamity  
Should light upon the Greeks, who for his sake  
Had crossed the sea to carry war to Troy.  
And first he threw a leopard's spotted hide

O'er his broad back, and placed the brazen helm 35  
Upon his head, and took in his strong grasp  
A spear, and went to bid his brother wake, —  
His brother, the chief ruler over all  
The men of Greece, and honored like a god.  
He found him at his galley's prow in act 40  
To sheath his shoulders in the shining mail,  
And pleased to greet his coming. To the king  
Thus Menelaus, great in battle, spake : —

“ Why arm thyself, my brother? Wouldst thou  
send

A warrior to explore the Trojan camp? 45  
None will accept the task, I fear, to creep  
Alone at dead of night, a spy, within  
The hostile lines ; — a bold man must he be.”

Then answered Agamemnon, king of men : —  
“ Most noble Menelaus, much we need 50  
Wise counsel — thou and I — to save our men  
And galleys from destruction, since the will  
Of Jove is changed. Now hath the God respect  
To Hector's sacrifices ; for in truth  
I never saw — I never heard of one 55  
Who in one day performed such mighty deeds  
As Hector, dear to Jove, just now hath wrought,  
Though not the son of goddess or of god.  
Those deeds will be, I deem, for many a day  
A cause of bitter sorrow to the Greeks, — 60  
Such evil hath he wrought. Now go at once,  
And from their galleys call Idomeneus

And Ajax ; while to noble Nestor's tent  
I go, and pray that he will rise and give  
Their orders to the sacred band of guards ; — 65  
For they will hearken to him, since his son  
Commands them jointly with Meriones,  
The armor-bearer of Idomeneus, —  
Both named by us to that important trust."

Then Menelaus, great in battle, said : — 70  
"What wilt thou, then, and what dost thou command, —

That I remain with them until thou come,  
Or, having given the message, seek thee here ? "

Again the monarch Agamemnon spake : —  
"Wait there, lest as we go I meet thee not, 75  
For many ways are through the camp. But thou,  
In going, shout aloud and bid them all  
Be vigilant, accosting every one  
By his paternal name, and giving each  
Due honor : bear thyself not haughtily : 80  
We too must labor ; for when we were born  
Jove laid this hard condition on us all."

So spake he, and, dismissing with that charge  
His brother, hastened to where Nestor lay,  
The shepherd of his people. Him he found 85  
On his soft couch within his tent beside  
His dark-brown ship. Around him scattered shone  
His arms, — a shield, two spears, a gleaming helm,  
And pliant belt, with which the ancient man  
Girded himself when arming to lead on 90

His men to murderous fight ; — for not to age  
 The warrior yielded yet. He raised his head,  
 And, leaning on his elbow, questioned thus  
 Atrides : “ Who art thou that traversest  
 The camp beside the fleet at dead of night, 95  
 Alone, while others sleep ? Com’st thou to find  
 One of the guardsmen, or a comrade ? Speak ;  
 Come not in silence thus : what wouldst thou have ? ”

Then answered Agamemnon, king of men : —  
 “ O Nestor, son of Neleus, whom the Greeks 100  
 All glory in ! thou certainly wilt know  
 Atrides Agamemnon, whom the will  
 Of Jove hath visited with hardships great  
 Beyond what others bear, to last while breath  
 Is in my lungs, and while my knees can move. 105  
 I wander thus abroad because sweet sleep  
 Comes not to close my eyelids, and the war  
 And slaughter of the Greeks distress me sore.  
 For them I greatly fear, my heart is faint,  
 My mind confounded. In my breast the heart 110  
 Pants, and my limbs all tremble. If thou wilt, —  
 For, as I see, thou also dost not sleep, —  
 Come with me to the guards, that we may know  
 Whether, o’ercome by toil and weariness,  
 They give themselves to slumber and forget 115  
 Their watch. The foe is near us in his camp,  
 And how know we that even now by night  
 He plans not, to attack us in our tents ? ”

Then Nestor, the Gerenian knight, replied : —

“ Atrides Agamemnon, glorious king 120  
Of men, almighty Jove will not perform  
For Hector all that Hector plans and hopes ;  
And heavier cares, I think, will yet be his  
When once Achilles’ wrath is turned away.  
Yet willingly I join thee. Let us call 125  
The other chiefs, — Ulysses, Diomed,  
Both mighty spearmen ; Ajax, swift of foot ;  
And the brave son of Phyleus. It were well  
To send and bid the mightier Ajax come,  
And King Idomeneus, for farthest off 130  
The ships of both are stationed. I shall chide  
Thy brother Menelaus — though he be  
Honored and dear, and though it please thee not —  
For sleeping, while he leaves such toils as these  
To thee alone. He should be here among 135  
The chiefs, exhorting them to valiant deeds ;  
For now the hour of bitter need is come.”

Again spake Agamemnon, king of men : —  
“ At other times, old chief, I would have begged  
That thou shouldst blame him : he is oft remiss, 140  
And late to act ; but not because of sloth,  
Or want of spirit, — but he looks to me  
And waits for my example. Yet to-night  
He rose before me, sought me, and is sent  
To call the chiefs whom thou hast named ; and now  
Let us go on, and meet them where they wait, 146  
Among the guards and just before the gates, —  
For I appointed that the trysting-place.”

And Nestor, the Gerenian knight, replied :—  
“ Then let no Greek condemn him, or refuse 150  
To heed and to obey when he shall speak.”

He spake, and drew his tunic o’er his breast,  
Laced the fair sandals to his shapely feet,  
And round him fastened, with a clasp, his cloak, —  
A double web of purple, with full folds 155  
And flowing pile. He grasped a massive spear,  
Its blade of trenchant brass. And first he sought  
The galleys of the Achaians brazen-mailed.  
There shouted Nestor the Gerenian knight,  
To raise Ulysses, best of counsellors, 160  
Jove-like in wisdom ; who perceived the voice,  
And issued from his tent in haste, and said : —

“ What brings you forth to walk the camp at night,  
Beside the ships alone ; what urgent cause ? ”

Then answered Nestor, the Gerenian knight : — 165  
“ Son of Laertes, nobly born, and skilled  
In wise devices, be thou not displeased :  
A fearful woe impends above the Greeks :  
Come, then, and call the other chiefs, to give  
Their counsel whether we shall flee or fight.” 170

He spake ; and wise Ulysses, entering  
His tent again, upon his shoulders laid  
His well-wrought shield, and joined them as they  
went,

Till, coming to Tydides Diomed,  
They found him by his tent among his arms, 175  
His comrades sleeping round him with their shields

Beneath their heads. Their spears were set upright,  
The nether points in earth. The polished brass  
Gleamed like the lightnings of All-Father Jove.

In sleep the hero lay ; a wild bull's hide 180  
Was spread beneath him, and a carpet dyed  
With glowing colors propped his head. The knight,  
Gerenian Nestor, touched him with his foot  
And roused him, and addressed him chidingly : —

“ O son of Tydeus ! wilt thou calmly sleep 185  
All the night long ? And hast thou, then, not heard  
That on a height amidst the plain the sons  
Of Troy are stationed, near the ships, and small  
The space that parts the enemy's camp from ours ? ”

He spake. The son of Tydeus sprang from sleep  
At once, and answered him with wingèd words : —

“ Thy labors are too constant, aged man ; 190  
Thou shrinkest from no hardship. Are there not  
Young men among the Greeks to walk the camp  
And call the kings ? Thou never takest rest.” 195

And Nestor, the Gerenian knight, replied : —  
“ Well hast thou said, my friend, for I have sons  
Without reproach, and I have many troops ;  
And any one of these might walk the camp  
And give the summons. But to-night there lies 200  
A hard necessity upon the Greeks,  
And their destruction and their rescue hang  
Balanced on a knife's edge. Come then, since thou  
Art younger, call swift Ajax and the son  
Of Phyleus, if thou wouldst relieve my age.” 205

He spake ; and Diomed around him flung  
 A tawny lion's ample hide, that reached  
 Down to his feet, and took his spear and went  
 And summoned the two kings, and brought them  
 forth.

Now when they came among the assembled guard,  
 Its leaders were not slumbering ; every man 211  
 Sat watchful and in arms. As dogs that guard  
 Flocks in a sheepfold hear some savage beast  
 That comes through thickets down the mountain-  
 side ;

Loud is the clamor of the dogs and men, 215  
 And sleep is frightened thence, — so gentle sleep  
 Fled from the eyes of those who watched, that night,  
 Sadly, with eyes turned ever toward the plain,  
 Intently listening for the foe's approach.

The aged Nestor saw them, and rejoiced, 220  
 And thus encouraged them with wingèd words : —

“ Watch thus, dear youths, let no one yield to sleep,  
 Lest we become the mockery of the foe.”

He spake, and crossed the trench ; and with him  
 went

The Grecian leaders, they who had been called 225  
 To council. With them went Meriones  
 And Nestor's eminent son, for they had both  
 Been summoned. Crossing to the other side  
 Of that deep trench, they found an open space  
 Clear of the dead, in which they sat them down, —  
 Just where the fiery Hector, having slain 231

Many Achaïans, turned him back when night  
Came o'er him. There they sat to hold debate ;  
And thus spake Nestor the Gerenian knight : —

“ Friends ! is there none among you who so far 235  
Trusts his own valor that he will to-night  
Venture among the Trojans ? He perchance  
Might capture on the borders of the camp  
Some foeman wandering, or might bring report  
Of what they meditate, and whether still 240  
They mean to keep their station far from Troy  
And near our ships, or, since their late success,  
Return to Ilium. Could he safely bring  
This knowledge back to us, his meed were great, —  
Glory among all men beneath the sky, 245  
And liberal recompense. As many chiefs  
As now command our galleys, each would give  
A black ewe with a suckling lamb, — such gifts  
No one hath yet received, — and he should sit  
A guest at all our banquets and our feasts.” 250

He spake ; and all were silent for a space.  
Then Diomed, the great in battle, said : —

“ Nestor, my resolute spirit urges me  
To explore the Trojan camp, that lies so near ;  
Yet, were another warrior by my side, 255  
I should go forth with a far surer hope,  
And greater were my daring. For when two  
Join in the same adventure, one perceives  
Before the other how they ought to act ;  
While one alone, however prompt, resolves 260

More tardily and with a weaker will."

He spake ; and many a chief made suit to share  
The risk with Diomed. The ministers  
Of Mars, the chieftains Ajax, asked to go ;  
Meriones desired it ; Nestor's son 265  
Greatly desired to join the enterprise ;  
Atrides Menelaus, skilled to wield  
The spear, desired it ; and that hardy chief,  
Ulysses, longed to explore the Trojan camp,  
For full of daring aims was the great soul 270  
Within his bosom. Agamemnon then,

The king of men, took up the word and said : —

"Tydides Diomed, most dear of men,  
Choose from the many chiefs, who ask to bear  
A part with thee, the bravest. Be not moved 275  
By deference to take the worse and leave  
The abler warrior. Pay no heed to rank,  
Or race, or wide extent of kingly rule."

Thus spake the king ; for in his heart he feared  
For fair-haired Menelaus. Diomed, 280  
The great in battle, then addressed them all : —

"Ye bid me choose : how, then, can I o'erlook  
Godlike Ulysses, prudent in resolve,  
And firm in every danger, well beloved  
By Pallas. Give me him, and our return 285  
Is sure, though from consuming flames ; for he  
Is wise to plan beyond all other men."

Ulysses, nobly born and hardy, spake  
In turn : "Tydides, praise me not too much,

Nor blame me, for thou speakest to the Greeks, 290  
Who know me. Meantime let us haste to go,  
For the night wears away, and morn is near.  
The stars are high, two thirds of night are past, —  
The greater part, — and scarce a third remains.”

He spake ; and both arrayed themselves for fight.  
The mighty warrior Thrasymedes gave 296  
The two-edged sword he wore to Diomed, —  
Whose own was at the galleys, — and a shield.  
The hero then put on his helmet, made  
Of tough bull-hide, with neither cone nor crest, —  
Such as is worn by beardless youths. A bow, 301  
Quiver, and sword Meriones bestowed  
Upon Ulysses, placing on his brows  
A leathern helmet, firmly laced within  
By many a thong, and on the outer side 305  
Set thickly with a tusky boar's white teeth,  
Which fenced it well and skilfully. A web  
Of woollen for the temples lined the work.  
This helm Autolycus once bore away  
From Eleon, the city where he sacked 310  
The stately palace of Amyntor, son  
Of Ormenus. The captor gave the prize  
To the Cytheran chief, Amphidamas,  
Who bore it to Scandeia, and in turn  
Bestowed it upon Molus as his guest, 315  
And Molus gave it to Meriones,  
His son, to wear in battle. Now at last  
It crowned Ulysses' temples. When the twain

Were all accoutred in their dreadful arms,  
 Forward they went, and left the assembled chiefs,  
 While, sent by Pallas forth, upon their right 321  
 A heron flew beside their path. The bird  
 They saw not, for the night was dark, but heard  
 Its rustling wings. Ulysses at the sound  
 Rejoiced, and supplicated Pallas thus : — 325

“Hear ! daughter of the Ægis-bearer Jove !  
 Thou who art near me in all dangers, thou  
 Whose eye is on me wheresoe’er I go,  
 Befriend me, Pallas, yet again, and grant  
 That, laden with great glory, we return 330  
 Safe to the galleys, mighty deeds performed,  
 And woe inflicted on the Trojan race.”

Next Diomed, the great in battle, prayed : —  
 “Daughter invincible of Jove, give ear  
 Also to me. Be with me now, as once 335  
 Thou didst attend on Tydeus nobly born,  
 My father, when he bore an embassy  
 To Thebè from the Achaians. He beside  
 The Asopus left the Achaians mailed in brass,  
 And bore a friendly message to the sons 340  
 Of Cadmus, and on his return performed  
 Full many a mighty deed with aid from thee,  
 Great goddess ! for thou stoodest by his side.  
 Stand now by me ; be thou my shield and guard ;  
 And I, in turn, will offer up to thee 345  
 A yearling heifer, broad between the horns,  
 Which never ploughman yet hath tamed to bear

The yoke. Her to thine altar will I bring,  
With gilded horns, to be a sacrifice."

So prayed they. Pallas listened to their prayers ;  
And, having supplicated thus the child 351  
Of Jove Almighty, the two chiefs went on  
Like lions through the darkness of the night,  
Through slaughter, heaps of corpses, and black blood.

Nor now had Hector suffered the brave sons 355  
Of Troy to sleep, but summoned all the chiefs,  
Leaders, and princes of the host, and thus  
Addressed the assembly with well-ordered words:—

"Who of you all will promise to perform  
The task I set him, for a large reward ? 360  
For ample shall his meed be. I will give  
A chariot and two steeds with lofty necks,  
Swifter than the swift galleys of the Greeks.  
Great glory will be his whoever dares  
Approach those ships and bring the knowledge  
thence 365

Whether the fleet is guarded as before,  
Or whether, yielding to our arms, the foe  
Is meditating flight, and, through the night  
O'ercome with weariness, keeps watch no more."

He spake ; and all were silent for a space. 370  
Now there was one, among the Trojan chiefs,  
Whose father was Eumedes, of the train  
Of reverend heralds. Dolon was his name,  
And he was rich in gold and brass, deformed  
In face but swift of foot, an only son 375

Among five sisters. He stood forth among  
The Trojans, and replied to Hector thus : —

“ My daring spirit, Hector, urges me  
To visit the swift ships and learn the state  
Of the Greek host. But hold thy sceptre forth, 380  
And solemnly attest the gods that thou  
Wilt give to me the horses, and the car  
Engrailed with brass, which bear the illustrious son  
Of Peleus. I shall not explore in vain,  
Nor balk thy hope of me ; for I will pass 385  
Into the camp until I reach the ship  
Of Agamemnon, where the chiefs are now  
Debating whether they shall fly or fight.”

He spake ; and Hector held the sceptre forth,  
And swore : “ Be Jupiter the Thunderer, 390  
Husband of Juno, witness, that those steeds  
Shall bear no other Trojan than thyself.  
That honor I confirm to thee alone.”

He spake. It was an idle oath, yet gave  
New courage to the spy, who instantly 395  
Upon his shoulders hung his crooked bow,  
And round him flung a gray wolf's hide, and placed  
A casque of otter-skin upon his head,  
And took his pointed javelin, and made haste  
To reach the Grecian fleet. Yet was he doomed 400  
Never to leave that fleet again, nor bring  
Tidings to Hector. Soon was he beyond  
The crowd of men and steeds, and eagerly  
Held on his way. Ulysses first perceived

His coming, and thus spake to Diomed : — 405

“ Some one, Tydides, from the enemy’s camp  
Is coming, either as a spy, or else  
To spoil the dead. First let us suffer him  
To pass us by a little on the plain,  
Then let us rush and seize him. Should his speed  
Be greater than our own, let us attack 411  
The fugitive with spears, and drive him on  
To where our ships are lying, from his camp,  
Lest, flying townward, he escape our hands.”

He spake ; and both lay down without the path,  
Among the dead, while he unwarily 416  
Passed by them. When he now had gone as far  
As two yoked mules might at the furrow’s end  
Precede a pair of oxen, — for by mules 419  
The plough is drawn more quickly through the soil  
Of the deep fallow, — then they rose, and rushed  
To seize him. As he heard their steps he stopped,  
In hope that his companions had been sent  
From Troy by Hector to conduct him back.  
But when they came within a javelin’s cast, 425  
Or haply less, he saw that they were foes,  
And moved his nimble knees, and turned to flee,  
While rapidly they followed. As two hounds,  
Sharp-toothed, and trained to track their prey, pursue  
Through forest-grounds some fawn or hare that runs  
Before them panting, so did Diomed 431  
And terrible Ulysses without stop  
Follow the fugitive, to cut him off

From his own people. In his flight he came 434  
Where soon he would have mingled with the guards,  
Close to the fleet. Then Pallas breathed new strength  
Into Tydides, that no other Greek  
Might boast that he had wounded Dolon first,  
And steal the honor. Therefore, with his spear  
Uplifted, Diomed rushed on and spake : — 440

“ Stop, or my spear o’ertakes thee, nor wilt thou  
Escape a certain death from this right hand.”

He spake, and hurled his spear — but not to  
smite —

At Dolon, over whose right shoulder passed  
The polished weapon, and, descending, pierced 445  
The ground. Then Dolon, pale and fear-struck,  
stopped,  
And quaked, with chattering teeth and stammering  
speech.

They, breathless with the chase, came up and seized  
His hands, while, bursting into tears, he spake : —

“ Take me alive, and ye shall have from me 450  
A ransom : there is store of brass and gold  
And well-wrought steel, of which a princely share  
My father will bestow when he shall hear  
Of me alive and at the Grecian fleet.”

The crafty chief Ulysses answered thus : — 455  
“ Take heart, and cease to think of death, but tell,  
And truly, why thou camest to our fleet :  
Was it to strip the bodies of the dead ?  
Camest thou, sent by Hector, as a spy

Among our ships, or of thine own accord ?” 460

And Dolon answered, trembling still with fear : —

“ Hector, against my will and to my hurt,  
Persuaded me. He promised to bestow  
On me the firm-paced coursers, and the car  
Engrailed with brass, which bear the illustrious son  
Of Peleus, and enjoined me by the aid 466

Of darkness to approach the foe and learn  
Whether ye guard your galleys as before,  
Or, overcome by us, consult on flight,  
And, wearied with the hardships of the day, 470  
Have failed to set the accustomed nightly watch.”

The man of craft, Ulysses, smiled, and said : —  
“ Truly, thy hope was set on princely gifts, —  
The steeds of war-renowned Æacides,  
Hard to be reined by mortal hands, or driven 475  
By any, save by Peleus’ son himself,  
Whom an immortal mother bore. But come,  
Tell me, — and tell the truth, — where hast thou left  
Hector, the leader of the host, and where  
Are laid his warlike arms ; where stand his steeds ;  
Where are the sentinels, and where the tents 481  
Of other chiefs ? On what do they consult ?  
Will they remain beside our galleys here,  
Or do they meditate, since, as they say,     •  
The Greeks are beaten, a return to Troy ? ” 485

Dolon, Eumedes’ son, made answer thus : —

“ What thou requirest I will truly tell.

Hector is with his counsellors, and now,

Apart from all the bustle, at the tomb  
 Of Ilus the divine, he plans the war. 490  
 Sentries, of whom thou speakest, there are none ;  
 No chosen band, O hero ! has in charge  
 To guard the camp. By all their blazing fires,  
 Constrained by need, the Trojans keep awake,  
 And each exhorts his fellow to maintain 495  
 The watch : not so the auxiliar troops who came  
 From far : they sleep, and since they have no wives  
 Nor children near, they let the Trojans watch."

Then thus the man of wiles, Ulysses, spake : —  
 "How sleep they, — mingled with the knights of  
 Troy 500  
 Or by themselves ? Tell me, that I may know."

Dolon, Eumedes' son, made answer thus : —  
 "What thou requirest I will truly tell.  
 On one hand, toward the sea, the bowmen lie  
 Of Caria and Pæonia, and with them 505  
 Lelegans, Caucons, and the gallant tribe  
 Of the Pelasgians. On the other hand,  
 Toward Thymbra, are the Lycians, the proud race  
 Of Mysia, Phrygia's knights, and cavalry  
 Of the Mæonians. Why should ye inquire 510  
 The place of each ? If ye design to-night  
 To penetrate into the Trojan camp,  
 There are the Thracians, newly come, apart  
 From all the others : with them is their king,  
 Rhesus, the son of Eioneus ; his steeds 515  
 Are far the largest and most beautiful

I ever saw, — the snow is not so white,  
The wind is not so swift. His chariot shines  
With gold and silver, and the coat of mail  
In which he came to Troy is all of gold, 520  
And gloriously and marvellously bright,  
Such as becomes not mortal men to wear,  
But the gods only. Now to your swift ships  
Lead me ; or bind me fast with thongs, and here  
Leave me till your return ; and ye shall know 525  
Whether the words I speak be true or false.”

Then sternly spake the gallant Diomed : —  
“ Once in our hands a prisoner, do not think,  
O Dolon ! to escape, though thou hast told  
Things that shall profit us. For if we now 530  
Release thee thou wilt surely come again  
To the Greek fleet, a spy, or openly  
To fight against us. If I take thy life,  
’T is certain thou wilt harm the Greeks no more.”

He spake. And as the suppliant took his chin 535  
In his large hand, and had begun a prayer  
He smote him with his sword at the mid-neck,  
And cut the tendons both ; the severed head,  
While yet he spake, fell, rolling in the dust.  
And then they took his helm of otter-skin, 540  
The wolf’s-hide, sounding bow, and massive spear.  
The nobly born Ulysses in his hand  
Lifted the trophies high, devoting them  
To Pallas, deity of spoil, and prayed : —

“ Delight thyself, O goddess, in these arms, 545

For thee we first invoke, of all the gods  
Upon Olympus. Guide us now to find  
The camp and coursers of the sons of Thrace."

He spake ; and, raising them aloft, he hung  
The spoils upon a tamarisk, and brake 559  
Reeds and the spreading branches of the tree  
To form a mark, that so on their return  
They might not, in the darkness, miss the spot.  
Then onward, mid strewn arms and pools of blood,  
They went, and soon were where the Thracians lay.  
There slept the warriors, overpowered with toil ; 556  
Their glittering arms were near them, fairly ranged  
In triple rows, and by each suit of arms  
Two coursers. Rhesus slumbered in the midst.  
Near him were his fleet horses, which were made  
Fast to the chariot's border by the reins. 561

Ulysses saw them first, and, pointing, said : —

" This is the man, O Diomed, and these  
The steeds, described by Dolon whom we slew.  
Come, then ; put forth thy strength of arm, for ill  
Doth it become thee to stand idle here, 566  
Armed as thou art. Loose thou the steeds ; or else  
Slay thou the men, and leave the steeds to me."

He spake. The blue-eyed Pallas straightway gave  
Strength to Tydides, who on every side 570  
Dealt slaughter. From the smitten by the sword  
Rose fearful groans ; the ground was red with blood.  
As when a ravening lion suddenly  
Springs on a helpless flock of goats or sheep.

So fell Tydides on the Thracian band, 575  
Till twelve were slain. Whomever Diomed  
Approached and smote, the sage Ulysses seized,  
And drew him backward by the feet, that thus  
The flowing-manèd coursers might pass forth  
Unhindered, nor, by treading on the dead, 580  
Be startled ; for they yet were new to war.  
Now when the son of Tydeus reached the king, —  
The thirteenth of his victims, — him he slew  
As he breathed heavily ; for on that night  
A fearful dream, in shape Cœnides' son, 585  
Stood o'er him, sent by Pallas. Carefully  
Ulysses meantime loosed the firm-paced steeds,  
And, fastening them together, drave them forth,  
Urging them with his bow : he had not thought  
To take the showy lash that lay in sight 590  
On the fair chariot-seat. In going thence  
He whistled, as a sign to Diomed,  
Who lingered, pondering on his next exploit, —  
Whether to seize the chariot where was laid  
The embroidered armor, dragging it away ; 595  
Or, lifting it aloft, to bear it thence ;  
Or take more Thracian lives. As thus his thoughts  
Were busy, Pallas, standing near him, spake : —  
“ O son of large-souled Tydeus, think betimes  
Of thy return to where the galleys lie ; 600  
Else may some god arouse the sons of Troy,  
And thou be forced to reach the ships by flight.”  
She spake. He knew the goddess by her voice,

And leaped upon a steed. Ulysses lashed  
 The horses with his bow, and on they flew 605  
 Toward the swift galleys of the Grecian host.

Apollo, bearer of the silver bow,  
 Kept no vain watch, and, angry when he saw  
 Minerva at the side of Diomed,  
 Down to the mighty host of Troy he came, 610  
 And roused from sleep a Thracian counsellor, —  
 Hippocoön, a kinsman of the house  
 Of Rhesus. Leaping from his couch, he saw  
 The vacant spot where the swift steeds had stood,  
 And, weltering in their blood, the dying chiefs. 615  
 He saw, and wept aloud, and called by name  
 His dear companion. Then a clamor rose,  
 And boundless tumult, as the Trojans came  
 All rushing to the spot, and marvelling  
 At what the daring warriors, who were now 620  
 Returning to the hollow ships, had done.

And when these warriors now had reached the spot  
 Where Hector's spy was slain, Ulysses, dear  
 To Jupiter, reined in the fiery steeds,  
 And Diomed leaped down and took the spoil 625  
 Blood-stained, and gave it to Ulysses' hands,  
 And mounted. Then again they urged the steeds,  
 Which, not unwilling, flew along the way.  
 First Nestor heard the approaching sound, and  
 said : —

“ Friends, chiefs and princes of the Greeks, my  
 heart — 630

Truly or falsely — urges me to speak.  
The trampling of swift steeds is in my ears.  
O that Ulysses and the gallant son  
Of Tydeus might be bringing at this hour  
Firm-footed coursers from the enemy's camp ! 635  
Yet must I fear that these, our bravest chiefs,  
Have met disaster from the Trojan crew."

While he was speaking yet, the warriors came.  
They sprang to earth ; their friends, rejoicing, flocked  
Around them, greeting them with grasp of hands 640  
And with glad words, while the Gerenian knight,  
Nestor, inquired : " Declare, illustrious chief,  
Glory of Greece, Ulysses, how ye took  
These horses : from the foe ; — or did some god  
Bestow them ? They are glorious as the sun. 645  
Oft am I midst the Trojans, for, though old,  
I lag not idly at the ships ; yet ne'er  
Have my eyes looked on coursers like to these.  
Some god, no doubt, has given them, for to Jove,  
The God of storms, and Pallas, blue-eyed child 650  
Of ægis-bearing Jove, ye both are dear."

Then sage Ulysses answered : " Pride of Greece !  
Neleian Nestor, truly might a god  
Have given us nobler steeds than even these.  
All power is with the gods. But these of which 655  
Thou askest, aged man, are brought from Thrace,  
And newly come. Brave Diomed hath slain  
Their lord, and twelve companions by his side, —  
All princes. Yet another victim fell, —

A spy whom, near our ships, we put to death, — 660  
A man whom Hector and his brother chiefs  
Sent forth by midnight to explore our camp.”

He spake, and gayly caused the firm-paced steeds  
To pass the trench ; the other Greeks, well pleased,  
Went with him. When they reached the stately tent  
Of Diomed, they led the coursers on 666

To stalls where Diomed's fleet horses stood  
Champing the wholesome corn, and bound them there  
With halters neatly shaped. Ulysses placed  
Upon his galley's stern the bloody spoil 670  
Of Dolon, to be made an offering

To Pallas. Then, descending to the sea,  
They washed from knees and neck and thighs the  
grime

Of sweat ; and when in the salt wave their limbs  
Were cleansed, and all the frame refreshed, they  
stepped 675

Into the polished basins of the bath,  
And, having bathed and rubbed with fragrant oil  
Their limbs, they sat them down to a repast,  
And from a brimming jar beside them drew,  
And poured to Pallas first, the pleasant wine. 680

## BOOK XI.

NOW did the Morning from her couch beside  
Renowned Tithonus rise, that she might bring  
The light to gods and men, when Jupiter  
To the swift galleys of the Grecian host  
Sent baleful Strife, who bore in hand aloft 5  
War's ensigns. On the huge black ship that brought  
Ulysses, in the centre of the fleet,  
She stood, where she might shout to either side, —  
To Telamonian Ajax in his tents  
And to Achilles, who had ranged their ships 10  
At each extreme of the Achaian camp,  
Relying on their valor and strong arms.  
Loud was the voice, and terrible, in which  
She shouted from her station to the Greeks,  
And into every heart it carried strength 15  
And the resolve to combat manfully  
And never yield. The battle now to them  
Seemed more to be desired than the return  
To their dear country in their roomy ships.  
Atrides called aloud, exhorting them 20  
To gird themselves for battle. Then he clad  
Himself in glittering brass. First to his thighs  
He bound the beautiful greaves with silver clasps,  
Then fitted to his chest the breastplate given  
By Cinyras, a pledge of kind intent ; — 25  
For, when he heard in Cyprus that the Greeks

Were bound for Ilium in their ships, he sent  
This gift, a homage to the king of men ; —  
Ten were its bars of tawny bronze, and twelve  
Were gold, and twenty tin ; and on each side 30  
Were three bronze serpents stretching toward the  
neck,

Curved like the colored bow which Saturn's son  
Sets in the clouds, a sign to men. He hung  
His sword, all glittering with its golden studs,  
About his shoulders. In a silver sheath 35  
It nestled, which was slung on golden rings.  
And then he took his shield, a mighty orb,  
And nobly wrought and strong and beautiful,  
Bound with ten brazen circles. On its disk  
Were twenty bosses of white tin, and one 40  
Of tawny bronze just in the midst, where glared  
A Gorgon's-head with angry eyes, round which  
Were sculptured Fear and Flight. Along its band  
Of silver twined a serpent wrought in bronze,  
With three heads springing from one neck and  
formed 45

Into an orb. Upon his head he placed  
A helmet rough with studs on every side,  
And with four bosses, and a horse-hair plume  
That nodded fearfully on high. He took  
In hand two massive spears, brass-tipped and sharp,  
That shone afar and sent their light to heaven, 51  
Where Juno and Minerva made a sound  
Like thunder in mid-sky, as honoring

The sovereign of Mycenæ rich in gold.

Each chief gave orders to his charioteer 55  
To stay his horses firmly by the trench,  
While they rushed forth in arms. At once arose,  
Ere yet the sun was up, a mighty din.  
They marshalled by the trench the men on foot ;  
The horse came after, with short space between. 60  
The son of Saturn sent among their ranks  
Confusion, and dropped down upon the host  
Dews tinged with blood, in sign that he that day  
Would send to Hades many a valiant chief.

The Trojans, on their side, in the mid-plain 65  
Drew up their squadrons on a hill, around  
The mighty Hector, and Polydamas  
The blameless, and Æneas, who among  
The sons of Troy was honored like a god,  
And three sons of Antenor, who were named 70  
Agenor and the noble Polybus  
And the young Acamas of godlike bloom,  
There Hector in the van uplifted bore  
His broad round shield. As some portentous star  
Breaks from the clouds and shines, and then again  
Enters their shadow, Hector thus appeared 75  
Among the foremost, issuing his commands,  
Then sought the hindmost. All in brass, he shone  
Like lightnings of the Ægis-bearer, Jove.

As when two lines of reapers, face to face, 80  
In some rich landlord's field of barley or wheat  
Move on, and fast the severed handfuls fall,

So, springing on each other, they of Troy  
 And they of Argos smote each other down,  
 And neither thought of ignominious flight. 85  
 They met each other man to man ; they rushed  
 Like wolves to combat. Cruel Strife looked on  
 Rejoicing ; she alone of all the gods  
 Was present in the battle ; all the rest,  
 Far off, sat quiet in their palaces, 90  
 The glorious mansions built for them along  
 The summits of Olympus. Yet they all  
 Blamed Saturn's son that he should honor thus  
 The Trojans. The All-Father heeded not  
 Their murmurings, but, seated by himself 95  
 Apart, exulting in his sovereignty,  
 Looked on the city of Troy, the ships of Greece,  
 The gleam of arms, the slayers, and the slain.

While yet 't was morn, and still the holy light  
 Of day was brightening, fast the weapons smote 100  
 On either side, and fast the people fell ;  
 But at the hour when on the mountain-slope  
 The wood-cutter makes ready his repast,  
 Weary with felling lofty trees, and glad  
 To rest, and eager for the grateful meal, 105  
 The Greeks, encouraging each other, charged  
 And broke the serried phalanxes of Troy.  
 First Agamemnon, springing forward, slew  
 The shepherd of his people and their chief,  
 Bienor, and his trusty comrade next, — 110  
 The charioteer Oïleus, who had leaped

Down from his chariot to confront the king.  
Him Agamemnon with his trenchant spear  
Smote in the forehead as he came. The helm  
Of massive brass was vain to stay the blow : 115  
The weapon pierced it and the bone, and stained  
The brain with blood ; it felled him rushing on.  
The monarch stripped the slain, and, leaving them  
With their white bosoms bare, went on to slay  
Isus and Antiphus, King Priam's sons, — 120  
One born in wedlock, one of baser birth, —  
Both in one chariot. Isus held the reins  
While Antiphus, the high-born brother, fought.  
These had Achilles once on Ida's height  
Made prisoners, as they fed their flocks ; he bound  
Their limbs with osier bands, but gave them up 126  
For ransom to the Trojans. Now the king  
Of men, Atrides Agamemnon, pierced  
Isus above the nipple with his spear,  
And with his falchion smiting Antiphus 130  
Beside the ear, he hurled him from his car.  
Then hastening up, and stripping from the dead  
Their shining mail, he knew them ; he had seen  
Both at the ships to which the fleet of foot,  
Achilles, brought them bound from Ida's side. 135  
As when a lion comes upon the haunt  
Of a swift hind, to make an easy prey  
Of her young fawns, and, with his powerful teeth  
Seizing them, takes their tender lives ; while she,  
Though nigh, can bring no aid but yields herself 140

To mortal fear, and, to escape his rage,  
Flies swiftly through the wood of close-grown oaks,  
With sweaty sides, — thus none of all the host  
Of Trojans could avert from Priam's sons  
Their fate, but fled in terror from the Greeks. 145

Next on Pisander and Hippolochus  
Atrides rushed, — brave warriors both, and sons  
Of brave Antimachus, the chief who took  
Gold and rich gifts from Paris, and refused  
To let the Trojans render Helen back 150  
To fair-haired Menelaus. His two sons,  
Both in one car, and reining their fleet steeds,  
Atrides intercepted ; they let fall  
The embroidered reins, dismayed, as, lion-like,  
Forward he came ; and, cowering, thus they  
prayed : — 155

“ Take us alive, Atrides, and accept  
A worthy ransom, for Antimachus  
Keeps in his halls large treasures, — brass and gold,  
And well-wrought steel ; and he will send, from these,  
Large ransom, hearing we are at the fleet 160  
Alive.” So prayed they with bland words, and met  
Harsh answer : “ Since ye call Antimachus  
Your father, who in Trojan council once  
Proposed that Menelaus, whom we sent  
A legate with Ulysses the divine, 165  
Should not return to Greece, but suffer death,  
Your blood must answer for your father's guilt.”

So spake the king, and, striking with his spear

Pisander's breast, he dashed him from the car.  
Prone on the ground he lay. Hippolochus 170  
Leaped down and met the sword. Atrides lopped  
His hands and drave the weapon through his neck,  
And sent the head to roll among the crowd.  
And then he left the dead, and rushed to where  
The ranks were in disorder; with him went 175  
His well-armed Greeks ; there they who fought on  
foot

Slaughtered the flying foot ; the horsemen there  
Clove horsemen down ; the coursers' trampling feet  
Raised the thick dust to shadow all the plain ;  
While Agamemnon cheered the Achaïans on, 180  
And chased and slew the foe. As when a fire  
Seizes a thick-grown forest, and the wind  
Drives it along in eddies, while the trunks  
Fall with the boughs amid devouring flames,  
So fell the flying Trojans by the hand 185  
Of Agamemnon. Many high-maned steeds  
Dragged noisily their empty cars among  
The ranks of battle, never more to bear  
Their charioteers, who lay upon the earth  
The vulture's feast, a sorrow to their wives. 190

But Jove beyond the encountering arms, the dust,  
The carnage, and the bloodshed and the din  
Bore Hector, while Atrides in pursuit  
Was loudly cheering the Achaïans on.  
Meantime the Trojans fled across the plain 195  
Toward the wild fig-tree growing near the tomb

Of ancient Ilus, son of Dardanus, —  
Eager to reach the town ; and still the son  
Of Atreus followed, shouting, and with hands  
Blood-stained and dust-begrimed. And when they  
reached

208

The Scæan portals and the beechen tree,  
They halted, waiting for the rear, like bees  
Chased panting by a lion who has come  
At midnight on them, and has put the herd  
To flight, and one of them to certain death, —  
Whose neck he breaks with his strong teeth and then  
Devours the entrails, lapping up the blood.  
Thus did Atrides Agamemnon chase  
The Trojans ; still he slew the hindmost ; still  
They fled before him. Many by his hand  
Fell from their chariots prone, for terrible  
Beyond all others with the spear was he.  
But when he now was near the city-wall,  
The Father of immortals and of men  
Came down from the high heaven, and took his seat  
On many-fountained Ida. In his grasp  
He held a thunderbolt, and this command  
He gave to Iris of the golden wings : —

205

210

216

“ Haste, Iris fleet of wing, and bear my words  
To Hector : — While he sees the king of men,  
Atrides, in the van and dealing death  
Among the ranks of warriors, let him still  
Give way, encouraging his men to hold  
Unflinching battle with the enemy.

220

But when Atrides, wounded by a spear 225  
Or arrow, shall ascend his chariot, then  
Will I nerve Hector's arm with strength to slay  
Until he come to the good ships of Greece,  
And the sun set, and hallowed night come down."

He spake ; and she, whose feet are like the wind  
In swiftness, heeded the command, and flew 231  
From Ida's summit to the sacred town  
Of Troy, and found the noble Hector, son  
Of warlike Priam, standing mid the steeds  
And the strong chariots, and, approaching, said : —

" O Hector, son of Priam, and like Jove 236  
In council ! Jove the All-Father bids me say,  
As long as thou shalt see the king of men,  
Atrides, in the van, and dealing death  
Among the ranks of warriors, thou shalt still 240  
Give way, encouraging thy men to hold  
Unflinching battle with the enemy ;  
But when Atrides, wounded by a spear  
Or arrow, shall ascend his chariot, then  
Will Jove endue thy arm with strength to slay 245  
Until thou come to the good ships of Greece,  
And the sun set, and hallowed night come down."

So the fleet Iris spake, and went her way ;  
While Hector, leaping from his car in arms,  
And wielding his sharp spears, went everywhere 250  
Among the Trojan ranks, exhorting them  
To combat, and renewed the stubborn fight.  
They rallied and stood firm against the Greeks.

The Greeks, in turn, made strong their phalanxes.  
The battle raged again, as front to front 255  
They stood, while Agamemnon eagerly  
Pressed forward, proud to lead the van in fight.

Say, Muses, dwellers of Olympus ! who  
First of the Trojans or their brave allies  
Encountered Atreus' son ? Iphidamas, 260  
Son of Antenor, strong and daring, bred  
On the rich soil of Thrace, the nurse of flocks.  
His grandsire Cisseus, from whose loins the fair  
Theano sprang, had reared him from a child  
Within his palace ; and, when he attained 265  
Youth's glorious prime, still kept him, giving him  
His child to wife. He wedded her, but left  
At once the bridal chamber when he heard  
Of the Greek war on Ilium, and set sail  
With twelve beaked galleys. These he afterward 270  
Left at Percopè, — marching on to Troy.  
And he it was who came to meet the son  
Of Atreus. As the heroes now drew near  
Each other, Agamemnon missed his aim ;  
His thrust was parried. Then Iphidamas 275  
Dealt him beneath the breastplate on the belt  
A vigorous blow, and urged the spear with all  
His strength of arm ; yet through the plated belt  
It could not pierce, for there it met a plate  
Of silver, and its point was turned like lead. 280  
With lion strength, Atrides seized and drew  
The weapon toward him, plucked it from the hand

That held it, and let fall his falchion's edge  
Upon the Trojan's neck and laid him dead.  
Unhappy youth ! he slept an iron sleep, — 285  
Slain fighting for his country, far away  
From the young virgin bride yet scarcely his,  
For whom large marriage-gifts he made, — of beeves  
A hundred, — and had promised from the flocks  
That thronged his fields a thousand sheep and goats.  
Atrides Agamemnon spoiled the slain, 291  
And bore his glorious armor off among  
The Argive host. Antenor's elder son,  
Illustrious Coön, saw, and bitter grief  
For his slain brother dimmed his eyes. He stood  
Aside, with his spear couched, while unaware 296  
The noble Agamemnon passed, and pierced  
The middle of the monarch's arm below  
The elbow ; through the flesh the shining point  
Passed to the other side. The king of men, 300  
Atrides, shuddered, yet refrained not then  
From combat ; but with his wind-seasoned spear  
He rushed on Coön, who, to drag away  
His father's son Iphidamas, had seized  
The body by the feet, and called his friends, 305  
The bravest, to his aid. Atrides thrust  
His brazen spear below the bossy shield,  
And slew him as he drew the corpse, and o'er  
The dead Iphidamas struck off his head.  
Thus were Antenor's sons — their doom fulfilled —  
Sent by Atrides to the realm of death. 311

And then he ranged among the enemy's ranks  
 With wielded lance and sword and ponderous stones,  
 While yet the warm blood issued from his wound.  
 But when the wound grew dry, and ceased to flow 315  
 With blood, keen anguish seized his vigorous frame.  
 As when a woman feels the piercing pangs  
 Of travail brought her by the Ilythian maids,  
 Daughters of Juno, who preside at births,  
 And walk the ministers of bitter pains, — 320  
 Such anguish seized on Agamemnon's frame ;  
 And, leaping to his chariot-seat, he bade  
 The guider of the steeds make haste to reach  
 The roomy ships, for he was overcome 324  
 With pain ; but first he shouted to the Greeks : —

“ O friends, the chiefs and princes of the Greeks !  
 Yours is the duty to drive back the war  
 From our good ships, since all-disposing Jove  
 Forbids me, for this day, to lead the fight.”

He spake. The charioteer applied the lash, 330  
 And not unwillingly the long-maned steeds  
 Flew toward the hollow ships ; upon their breasts  
 Gathered the foam ; beneath their rapid feet  
 Arose the dust, as from the battle's din  
 They bore the wounded warrior. Hector saw 335  
 The flight of Agamemnon, and aloud  
 Called to the Trojans and the Lycians thus : —

“ Trojan and Lycian warriors, and ye sons  
 Of Dardanus, who combat hand to hand,  
 Be men ; be mindful of your fame in war. 340

Our mightiest foe withdraws ; Saturnian Jove  
Crowns me with glory. Urge your firm-paced steeds  
On the brave Greeks, and win yet nobler fame."

He spake. His words gave courage and new  
strength

To every heart. As when a hunter cheers 345  
His white-toothed dogs against some lioness  
Or wild boar from the forest, Hector thus,  
The son of Priam, terrible as Mars  
The slayer of men, cheered on the gallant sons  
Of Troy against the Greeks. Himself, inspired 350  
With fiery valor, rushed among the foes  
In the mid-battle foremost, like a storm  
That swoops from heaven, and on the dark-blue sea  
Falls suddenly, and stirs it to its depths.

Who then was slain the first, and who the last, 355  
By Hector, Priam's son, whom Jove designed  
To honor? First, Asæus ; Dolops, son  
Of Clytis ; and Autonoüs ; and then  
Opites and Opheltius ; next to whom  
Æsymnus, Agelaus, Orus fell, 360  
And resolute Hipponoüs the last.  
All these, the princes of the Greeks, he slew,  
Then smote the common crowd. As when a gale  
Blows from the west upon the mass of cloud  
Piled up before the south-wind's powerful breath, 365  
And tears it with a mighty hurricane,  
While the swoln billows tumble, and their foam  
Is flung on high before the furious blast,

So by the sword of Hector fell the heads  
 Of the Greek soldiery ; and there had been 370  
 Ruin and ravage not to be repaired,  
 And the defeated Greeks had flung themselves  
 Into their ships, had not Ulysses then  
 Exhorted thus Tydides Diomed :—

“ Tydides ! what has quenched within our hearts  
 Their fiery valor ? Come, my friend, and take 376  
 Thy stand beside me : foul disgrace were ours  
 Should crested Hector make our fleet his prize.”

And thus the valiant Diomed replied :—  
 “ Most willingly I stand, and bear my part 380  
 In battle ; but with little hope, for Jove,  
 The God of storms, awards the day to Troy.”

He spake, and pierced Thymbræus with his spear  
 Through the left breast, and dashed him from his car.  
 Meanwhile Ulysses struck Molion down, 385  
 The prince’s stately comrade. These they left  
 Never to fight again, and made their way  
 Through the thick squadrons, carrying, as they went,  
 Confusion with them. As two fearless boars  
 Rush on the hounds, so, mingling in the war, 390  
 They bore the foe before them, and the Greeks  
 Welcomed a respite from the havoc made  
 By noble Hector. Next they seized a car  
 Which bore two chiefs, the bravest of their host, —  
 Sons of Percosian Merops, who was skilled 395  
 Beyond all men in portents. He enjoined  
 His sons to keep aloof from murderous war.

Yet did they not obey him, for the fate  
That doomed the twain to death impelled them on ;  
And Diomed, the mighty with the spear, 400  
Spoiled them of life, and bore their armor off,  
A glittering prize. Meantime Ulysses slew  
Hippodamus, and next Hypirochus.  
The son of Saturn looked from Ida's height,  
And bade the battle rage on either side 405  
With equal fury : both the encountering hosts  
Slew and were slain. Tydides with his spear  
Smote on the hip the chief Agastrophus,  
The son of Pæon, thoughtless wretch, whose steeds  
Were not at hand for flight ; his charioteer 410  
Held them at distance, while their master rushed  
Among the foremost warriors till he fell.  
Hector perceived his fall, as through the files  
He looked, and straightway hastened to the spot  
With shouts ; and after him came rapidly 415  
The phalanxes of Trojans. Diomed,  
The great in battle, shuddered as he saw,  
And thus addressed Ulysses, who was near : —  
“ Lo ! the destroyer, furious Hector, comes !  
Let us stand firm, and face and drive him back.” 420  
He said, and cast his brandished lance, nor missed  
The mark : it smote the helm on Hector's head.  
The brass glanced from the brass ; it could not pierce  
To the fair skin ; the high and threefold helm —  
A gift from Phœbus — turned the point aside. 425  
The chief fell back, and, mingling with the throng,

Dropped on one knee, and yet upheld himself  
With one broad palm upon the ground, while night  
Darkened his eyes. The son of Tydeus sprang  
To seize his spear, which now stood fixed in earth  
Among the foremost warriors. In that time 431  
Did Hector breathe again, and, having leaped  
Into his chariot, he avoided death,  
By mingling with the crowd ; while, spear in hand,  
Brave Diomed pursued him, shouting thus : — 435

“ This time, thou cur, hast thou escaped thy  
doom,

Though it was nigh thee. Phœbus rescues thee —  
The god to whom thou dost address thy prayers —  
Whene’er thou ventur’st mid the clash of spears. 440  
Yet will I surely slay thee when we meet,  
If any god be on my side ; and now  
I go to strike where’er I find a foe.”

He spake, and struck the son of Pæon down,  
Skilful to wield the spear. But now the spouse  
Of fair-haired Helen — Alexander — stood 445  
Leaning against a pillar by the tomb  
Of the Dardanian Ilus, who had been  
An elder of the people ; and he bent  
His bow against the monarch Diomed,  
Who at that moment knelt to strip the slain 450  
Of the rich breastplate, and the shield that hung  
Upon his shoulders, and the massive casque.  
The Trojan drew the bow’s elastic horn,  
And sent an arrow that not vainly flew,

But, striking the right foot, pierced through, and  
reached 455

The ground beneath. Then Paris, with a laugh,  
Sprang from his ambush, shouting boastfully : —

“Lo, thou art smitten ! Not in vain my shaft  
Has flown ; and would that it had pierced thy groin  
And slain thee ! Then the Trojans had obtained 460  
Reprieve from slaughter, — they who dread thee now  
As bleating goats a lion.” Undismayed,  
The valiant Diomed made answer thus : —

“Archer and railer ! proud of thy smart bow,  
And ogler of the women ! wouldst thou make 465  
Trial of valor hand to hand with me,  
Thy bow should not avail thee, nor thy sheaf  
Of many arrows. Thou dost idly boast  
That thou hast hit my foot. I heed it not.  
It is as if a woman or a child 470  
Had struck me. Lightly falls the weapon-stroke  
Of an unwarlike weakling. ’T is not so  
With me, for when one feels my weapon’s touch,  
It passes through him, and he dies ; his wife  
Tears with her hands her cheeks ; his little ones 475  
Are orphans ; earth is crimsoned with his blood ;  
And flocking round his carcass in decay,  
More numerous than women, are the birds.”

He spake. Ulysses, mighty with the spear,  
Came near and stood before him while he sat 480  
Concealed, and drew the arrow from his foot.  
Keen was the agony that suddenly

Shot through his frame : he leaped into his car,  
 And bade his charioteer make haste to reach  
 The roomy ships : the pain had reached his heart.  
 Ulysses, the great spearman, now was left 486  
 Alone, no Greek remaining by his side ;  
 For fear had seized them all. With inward grief  
 The hero thus addressed his mighty soul : —

“ What will become of me ? A great disgrace 490  
 Will overtake me if I flee in fear  
 Before this multitude ; and worse will be  
 My fate if I am taken here alone,  
 While Jove has driven away the other Greeks  
 In terror. Why these questions, since I know 495  
 That cowards skulk from combat, while the brave,  
 Wounded or wounding others, keeps his ground ? ”

While thus he reasoned with himself, the ranks  
 Of Trojans armed with bucklers came and closed  
 Around their dreaded enemy. As when 500  
 A troop of vigorous dogs and youths assail  
 From every side a wild boar issuing forth  
 From a deep thicket, whetting the white tusks  
 Within his crooked jaws ; they press around,  
 And hear his gnashings, yet beware to come 505  
 Too nigh the terrible animal, — so rushed  
 The Trojans round Ulysses, the beloved  
 Of Jupiter. Then first the hero smote  
 Deïopites on the shoulder-blade,  
 And next struck Thoön down, and Ennomus, 510  
 And in the navel pierced Chersidamas

With his sharp spear, below the bossy shield,  
When leaping from his chariot. In the dust  
He fell, and grasped the earth with dying hands.

Ulysses left them there, and with his spear 515  
He wounded Charops, son of Hippasus,  
And brother of brave Socus. Socus saw,  
And hastened to his aid, and, standing near,  
The godlike chief bespake Ulysses thus : —

“ Renowned Ulysses ! of whose arts and toils 520  
There is no end, thou either shalt to-day  
Boast to have slain two sons of Hippasus,  
Brave as they are, and stripped them of their arms,  
Or, smitten by my javelin, lose thy life.”

He spake, and smote the Grecian's orbèd shield.  
The swift spear, passing through the shining disk, 526  
And fixed in the rich breastplate, tore the skin  
From all his side ; yet Pallas suffered not  
The blade to reach the inner parts. At once  
The chief perceived that Socus had not given 530  
A mortal wound, and, falling back a step,  
Thus spake : “ Unhappy youth, thy doom will soon  
O'ertake thee. Though thou forcest me to pause  
From combat with the Trojans, I declare,  
This day thou sufferest the black doom of death. 535  
Thou, smitten by my spear, shalt bring to me  
Increase of glory, and shalt yield thy soul  
To the grim horseman Pluto.” Thus he spake,  
While Socus turned to flee ; and as he turned,  
Ulysses with the spear transfix'd his back, 540

And drave the weapon through his breast : he fell,  
With armor clashing, to the earth, while thus  
The great Ulysses gloried over him : —

“ O Socus ! son of warlike Hippasus  
The horseman ! death has overtaken thee, 545  
And thou couldst not escape. · Unhappy one !  
Now thou art dead thy father will not come  
To close thy eyes, nor she, the honored one  
Who gave thee birth ; but birds of prey shall flap  
Their heavy wings above thee, and shall tear 550  
Thy flesh, while I in dying shall receive  
Due funeral honors from the noble Greeks.”

He spake, and from his wounded side drew forth,  
And from his bossy shield, the ponderous spear  
Which warlike Socus threw. A gush of blood 555  
Followed, and torturing pain. Now, when they saw  
Ulysses bleed, the gallant sons of Troy  
Called to each other, rushing in a crowd  
To where he stood. Retreating as they came,  
He shouted to his comrades. Thrice he raised 560  
His voice as loud as human lungs could shout ;  
Thrice warlike Menelaus heard the cry,  
And spake at once to Ajax at his side : —

“ Most noble Ajax, son of Telamon,  
Prince of thy people ! to my ear is brought 565  
The cry of that unconquerable man,  
Ulysses, seemingly as if the foe  
Had hemmed him round alone, and pressed him sore  
In combat. Break we through the crowd, and bring

Succor, lest harm befall him, though so brave, — 570  
Fighting among the Trojans thus alone, —  
And lest the Greeks should lose their mighty chief.”

He spake, and led the way; his godlike friend  
Followed. They found Ulysses, dear to Jove, —  
The Trojans thronging round him like a troop 575  
Of ravening jackals round an antlered stag  
Which one who hunts upon the mountain-side  
Hath stricken with an arrow from his bow :  
By flight the stag escapes, while yet the blood  
Is warm and easily the limbs are moved ; 580  
But when at last the shaft hath quelled his strength,  
The hungry jackals in the forest-shade  
Among the hills attack him, till by chance  
The dreaded lion comes ; alarmed, they flee,  
And he devours the prey. So in that hour, 585  
Many and brave, the sons of Troy pursued  
Ulysses, skilled in war and wiles ; while he  
Wielded the spear and warded off the day  
Of death. Then Ajax, coming near him, stood,  
With his tall buckler, like a tower of strength 590  
Beside him, and the Trojans fled in fear  
On all sides. Warlike Menelaus took  
Ulysses by the hand, and led him forth  
From the thronged spot, while his attendant brought  
The chariot near him. Ajax sprang upon 595  
The Trojans, slaying Doryclus, a son  
Of Priam, basely born. Then Pandocus  
He wounded ; next he struck Lysander down,

Pyrasus and Pylartes. As a stream,  
 Swoln to a torrent by the showers of Jove. 600  
 Sweeps down, from hill to plain, dry oaks and pines,  
 And pours into the sea a muddy flood,  
 So mighty Ajax routed and pursued  
 The Trojans o'er the plain, and cut his way  
 Through steeds and warriors. Hector knew not this.  
 He fought where, on the battle's left, beside 606  
 The Xanthus, fastest fell the slain, and round  
 Great Nestor and the brave Idomeneus  
 Arose a mighty tumult. In that throng  
 Did Hector mingle with his spear and steeds, 610  
 Performing feats of valor, and laid waste  
 The ranks of youthful warriors. Yet the Greeks  
 Would not have yielded ground, if Paris, spouse  
 Of fair-haired Helen, had not forced the chief  
 Machaon, fighting gallantly, to pause ; 615  
 For with an arrow triple-barbed he pierced  
 The chief's right shoulder, and the valiant Greeks  
 Feared lest the battle turn and he be slain.  
 And thus Idomeneus to Nestor said :—

“ Neleian Nestor, glory of the Greeks, 620  
 Haste, mount thy chariot ; let Machaon take  
 A place beside thee ; urge thy firm-paced steeds  
 Rapidly toward the fleet ; a leech like him,  
 Who cuts the arrow from the wound and soothes  
 The pain with balms, is worth a host to us.” 625

He spake ; and the Gerenian knight obeyed,  
 And climbed the car in haste. Machaon, son

Of Æsculapius the peerless leech,  
Mounted beside him ; Nestor lashed the steeds,  
And toward the roomy ships, which well they knew,  
And longed to reach, they flew with eager speed.

Meantime Cebriones, who had his seat 634

By Hector in the chariot, saw the ranks  
Of Troy disordered, and addressed the chief : —

“While we, O Hector, here are mid the Greeks  
Just in the skirts of the tumultuous fray, 636  
The other Trojans, men and steeds, are thrown  
Into confusion where the warriors throng,  
For Telamonian Ajax puts their ranks  
To rout ; I know him well by that broad shield 640  
Borne on his shoulders. Thither let us drive  
Our steeds and chariot, where in desperate strife  
Meet horse and foot and hew each other down,  
And a perpetual clamor fills the air.” 644

He spake ; and with the whistling lash he struck  
The long-maned steeds, and, as they felt the stroke,  
Forward they flew with the swift car among  
The Greeks and Trojans, trampling in their way  
Corpses and shields. The axle underneath 649  
Was steeped in blood ; the rim of the chariot-seat  
Was foul with the red drops which from their hoofs  
The coursers sprinkled and the wheels threw up.  
Then Hector strove, by rushing on the crowd,  
To pierce it and break through it. To the Greeks  
His coming brought destruction and dismay ; 655  
And well his spear was wielded. Through the ranks

Of other warriors with the spear he ranged,  
With sword and ponderous stones ; yet warily  
He shunned the fight with Ajax Telamon.

Then Father Jove Almighty touched with fear <sup>660</sup>  
The heart of Ajax. All amazed he stood,  
And cast his sevenfold buckler of bull's-hide  
Upon his back, and, terrified, withdrew.  
Now casting glances like a beast of prey  
From side to side, he turned to right and left, <sup>665</sup>  
And, slowly yielding, moved knee after knee.  
As when the rustics with their hounds drive off  
A hungry lion from their stalls of kine,  
Whom, watching all the night, they suffer not  
To make their herd a prey ; but he, intent <sup>670</sup>  
On ravin, rushes forward, yet in vain ;  
For many a javelin flies from daring hands  
Against him, many a blazing torch is swung,  
At which, though fierce, he trembles, and at morn  
Stalks off in sullen mood ; — so Ajax, sad <sup>675</sup>  
At heart, and fearing for the Grecian fleet,  
Unwillingly fell back before the foe.  
And as, when entering in a field, an ass  
Slow-paced, whose flanks have broken many a shaft  
To splinters, crops the harvest as it grows, <sup>680</sup>  
And boys attack him with their rods, — though small  
Their strength, — but scarce, till he has browsed  
his fill,  
Can drive him forth, — so did the gallant sons  
Of Troy, and their allies from distant lands,

Continually pursue the mighty son 685  
Of Telamon, and hurl their spears against  
The centre of his shield. And now he wheeled,  
As conscious of great valor, and repulsed  
The crowding phalanxes ; and now again  
He turned to flee. And thus he kept the foe 690  
From reaching the swift galleys, while he stood  
Between the Greeks and Trojans, terrible  
In wrath. The javelins hurled by daring hands  
Against him — some hung fixed in his broad shield ;  
And many, ere they came to his fair skin, 695  
Fell midway, — eager though they were to pierce  
The warrior's side, — and plunged into the earth.

Eurypylus, Evæmon's noble son,  
Saw Ajax sorely pressed with many darts,  
And came and stood beside him, taking aim 700  
With his bright spear, and in the liver smote,  
Beneath the midriff, Apisaon, son  
Of Phausias, and a prince among his tribe.  
His knees gave way, and down he sank in death.  
But godlike Alexander, who beheld 705  
The slayer stripping Apisaon's corpse  
Of armor, at that moment bent his bow,  
And pierced Eurypylus in the right thigh.  
The reed brake in the wound. He writhed with pain,  
And mingled with his fellows in the ranks, 710  
Avoiding death, yet shouting to the Greeks : —

“O friends, the chiefs and leaders of the Greeks,  
Rally and keep your ground ; ward off the fate

Of death from Ajax, who is sorely pressed  
 With darts, and, much I fear, may not escape 715  
 Safe from this stormy conflict. Stand ye firm  
 Around the mighty son of Telamon."

So spake the wounded warrior ; while his friends  
 Rallied around him, with their shields inclined  
 Against their shoulders, and with lifted spears. 720  
 And Ajax came and joined them ; then he turned,  
 And firmly faced the foe. The Greeks renewed  
 The combat with a rage like that of fire.

Now meantime the Neleian coursers, steeped  
 In sweat, were bearing Nestor and the prince 725  
 Machaon from the battle. On the prow  
 Of his great ship, Achilles, swift of foot,  
 Looked forth, and, gazing on the hard-fought fray  
 And the sad rout, beheld them. Then he called  
 His friend Patroclus, shouting from the ship. 730  
 Patroclus heard, within the tent, and came,  
 Glorious as Mars ; — yet with that day began  
 His woes. The gallant Menœtiades  
 Made answer thus : " Why callest thou my name,  
 Achilles, and what needest thou of me ? " 735

And thus rejoined Achilles, swift of foot : —  
 " Son of Menœtius, nobly born, and well  
 Beloved by me, the Greeks, I deem, will soon  
 Be at my knees, imploring aid ; for now  
 A hard necessity besets their host. 740  
 But go, Patroclus, dear to Jove, and ask  
 Of Nestor who it is that he hath brought

Thus wounded from the field. Seen from behind,  
His form was like Machaon, — wholly like  
That son of Æsculapius ; but the face 745  
I saw not, as the rapid steeds flew by."

He spake. Patroclus hearkened to his friend,  
And hastened to the Grecian tents and ships.

Now when they reached the tent of Neleus' son,  
The warriors in the chariot set their feet 750  
Upon the nourishing earth. Eurymedon,  
The old man's charioteer, took from the mares  
Their harness ; while the chieftains cooled themselves,  
And dried their sweaty garments in the breeze,  
Facing the border of the sea, and then, 755  
Entering the tent of Nestor, sat them down  
On couches. Hecamedè, bright of hair,  
Prepared for them a mingled draught ; the maid,  
A daughter of the great Arsinoüs, came  
From Tenedos with Nestor, when the town 760  
Was ravaged by Achilles, and the Greeks  
Gave her to Nestor, chosen from the rest  
For him, as wisest of their counsellors.  
First she drew forth a table fairly wrought,  
Of polished surface, and with steel-blue feet, 765  
And on it placed a brazen tray which bore  
A thirst-provoking onion, honeycomb,  
And sacred meal of wheat. Near these she set  
A noble beaker which the ancient chief  
Had brought from home, embossed with studs of  
gold. 770

Four were its handles, and each handle showed  
Two golden turtles feeding, while below  
Two others formed the base. Another hand  
Could scarce have raised that beaker from its place,  
But Nestor lifted it with ease. The maid, 775  
Fair as a goddess, mingled Pramnian wine,  
And grated o'er it, with a rasp of brass,  
A goat's-milk cheese, and, sprinkling the white flour  
Upon it, bade them drink. With this they quenched  
Their parching thirst, and then amused the time 780  
With pleasant talk. Patroclus to the door  
Meantime, a godlike presence, came, and stood.  
The old man, as he saw him, instantly  
Rose from his princely seat and seized his hand,  
And led him in and bade him sit ; but he 785  
Refused the proffered courtesy, and said : —

“Nay, 't is no time to sit : persuade me not,  
Nursling of Jove ; for he is to be feared,  
And prone to wrath, who sent me to inquire  
What wounded man is with thee ; but I know, — 790  
Now that I see Machaon sitting here,  
The shepherd of the people. I must haste  
Back to Achilles, bearing my report.  
Thou knowest, ancient chief, how quick he is  
To take offence and blame the innocent.” 795

Then Nestor, the Gerenian knight, rejoined : —  
“Why does Achilles pity thus the sons  
Of Greece when wounded ? Little can he know  
What sorrow reigns throughout the Grecian host

While, smitten in the close or distant fight, 800  
Our bravest lie disabled in their ships:  
The valiant son of Tydeus — Diomed —  
Is wounded — wounded Agamemnon lies,  
And the great wielder of the javelin,  
Ulysses. By an arrow in the thigh 805  
Eurypylos is smitten, and I now  
Bring home this warrior with an arrow-wound.  
Yet doth Achilles, valiant as he is,  
Care nothing for the Greeks. Will he then wait  
Till our swift galleys, moored upon the shore, 810  
After a vain defence shall feed the flames  
Lit by the enemy's hand, and we be slain,  
And perish, heaps on heaps? My strength is now  
Not that which dwelt in these once active limbs.  
Would I were strong and vigorous as of yore, 815  
When strife arose between our men and those  
Of Elis for our oxen driven away,  
And, driving off their beeves in turn, I slew  
The Elean chief, the brave Itymoneus,  
Son of Hypirochus! For, as he sought 820  
To save his herd, a javelin from my arm  
Smote him the first among his band. He fell;  
His rustic followers fled on every side;  
And mighty was the spoil we took: of beeves  
We drave off fifty herds, as many flocks 825  
Of sheep, of swine as many, and of goats  
An equal number, and of yellow steeds  
Thrice fifty; — these were mares, and by their sides

Ran many a colt. We drave them all within  
Neleian Pylos in the night. Well pleased 830  
Was Neleus, that so large a booty fell  
To me, who entered on the war so young.  
When morning brake, the heralds' cry was heard  
Summoning all the citizens to meet  
To whom from fruitful Elis debts were due ; 835  
And then the princes of the Pyleans came,  
And made division of the spoil. For much  
The Epeians owed us : we were yet but few  
In Pylos, and had suffered grievously.  
The mighty Hercules in former years 840  
Had made us feel his wrath, and of our men  
Had slain the bravest : of the twelve who drew  
Their birth from Neleus, I alone am left ;  
The others fell. The Epeians brazen-mailed  
Saw this, delighted, and insulted us 845  
And did us wrong. When now the spoil was shared  
The old man for himself reserved a herd  
Of oxen, and a numerous flock of sheep, —  
Three hundred, with their shepherds, — for to him  
Large debts were due in Elis. He had sent 850  
Four horses once, of peerless speed, with cars,  
To win a tripod, the appointed prize.  
Augeias, king of men, detained them there,  
And sent the grieving charioteer away.  
My father, angered at the monarch's words 855  
And acts, took large amends, and gave the rest  
To share among the people, that no one

Might leave the ground, defrauded of his right.  
All this was justly done, and we performed  
Due sacrifices to the gods, throughout 860  
The city ; — when the third day came, and brought  
The Epeians all at once, in all their strength, —  
Both men on foot and prancing steeds. With these  
Came the Molions twain, well armed, though young  
And yet untrained to war. There is a town 865  
Named Thryoëssa, on a lofty hill  
Far off beside Alpheius, on the edge  
Of sandy Pylos. They beleaguered this,  
And sought to overthrow it. As they crossed  
The plain, Minerva came, a messenger, 870  
By night from Mount Olympus, bidding us  
Put on our armor. Not unwillingly  
The Pyleans mustered, but in eager haste  
For battle. Yet did Neleus not consent  
That I should arm myself, — he hid my steeds ; 875  
For still he deemed me inexpert in war.  
Yet even then, although I fought on foot,  
I won great honor even among the knights ;  
For so had Pallas favored me. . A stream  
Named Minyëius pours into the sea 880  
Near to Arena, where the Pylean knights  
Waited the coming of the holy morn,  
While those who fought on foot came thronging in.  
Thence, with our host complete, and all in arms,  
We marched, and reached at noon the sacred  
stream 885

Alpheius, where to Jove Omnipotent  
 We offered chosen victims, and a bull  
 To the river-god, another to the god  
 Of ocean, and a heifer yet unbroke  
 To blue-eyed Pallas. Then we banqueted, 890  
 In bands, throughout the army, and lay down  
 In armor by the river-side to sleep.  
 Meantime the brave Epeians stood around  
 The city, resolute to lay it waste.  
 But first was to be done a mighty work 895  
 Of war ; for as the glorious sun appeared  
 Above the earth we dashed against the foe,  
 Praying to Jove and Pallas. When the fight  
 Between the Eleans and the Pylean host  
 Was just begun, I slew a youthful chief, — 900  
 Mulius, — and bore away his firm-paced steeds.  
 The fair-haired Agamedè, eldest-born  
 Of King Augeias' daughters, was his spouse ;  
 And well to her each healing herb was known  
 That springs from the great earth. As he drew near,  
 I smote him with my brazen lance : he fell 906  
 To earth : I sprang into his car, and stood  
 Among the foremost warriors ; while, around,  
 The brave Epeians, as they saw him fall, —  
 The leader of their knights, their mightiest 910  
 In battle, — turned and, panic-stricken, fled,  
 Each his own way. I followed on their flight  
 Like a black tempest ; fifty cars I took,  
 And from each car I dashed two warriors down,

Pierced by my spear. And now I should have slain  
The young Molions also, Actor's sons, 916  
Had not their father, he who shakes the earth,  
Enshrouded them in mist, and hidden them  
From all pursuit. Then with victorious might  
Did Jove endue our arms, while we pursued 920  
The foe across a region strewn with shields, —  
Slaying, and gathering spoil, — until our steeds  
Came to Buprasium, rich in fields of wheat,  
And to the Olenian rock, and to the hill  
Alesium in Colonè. Pallas there 925  
Stayed our pursuit, and bade our host return.  
There slew I the last man, and left him there.  
And then the Achaians, guiding their swift steeds  
Homeward to Pylos from Buprasium, gave  
Great thanks to Jupiter among the gods, 930  
And Nestor among men. Such was I then  
Among the heroes ; but Achilles keeps  
His valor for himself alone, — and yet  
Bitterly must he grieve when he beholds  
Our people perish. O my friend ! how well 935  
Menœtius charged thee when he sent thee forth,  
From Phthia, to Atrides ! We were both —  
The nobly born Ulysses and myself —  
Within the palace, and we clearly heard  
What he commanded thee. For we had come 940  
To Peleus' stately dwelling, on our way  
Gathering a host in fertile Greece, and saw  
The great Menœtius there, and there we found

Achilles with thee. There the aged knight  
 Peleus was burning, in the palace-court, 945  
 A steer's fat thighs to Jove the Thunderer,  
 And lifted up a golden cup and poured  
 Dark wine upon the blazing sacrifice.  
 And both of you were busy with the flesh  
 When we were at the threshold. As he saw 950  
 Our coming, in surprise Achilles sprang  
 Toward us, and took our hands and led us in,  
 Bade us be seated, and before us placed  
 The generous banquet due to stranger-guests.  
 Then, having feasted, I began discourse, 955  
 Exhorting you to join us. Both of you  
 At once consented, and your fathers gave  
 Their admonitions. Aged Peleus charged  
 His son Achilles to excel the rest  
 In valor, while Menœtius, in his turn, 960  
 The son of Actor, gave thee this command : —

“ ‘ My son, Achilles is the nobler born,  
 But thou art elder. He surpasses thee  
 By far in warlike might, but thou must prompt  
 His mind with prudent counsels ; thou must warn 965  
 And guide him ; he will hearken to thy words  
 Meant for his good.’ The old man charged thee  
 thus.

Thou hast forgotten it. Yet speak thou now  
 To Peleus' warlike son ; and haply he  
 May heed thy counsels. Thou perchance mayst  
 bend 970

HIS will — who knows? — by thy persuasive words;  
For wholesome are the warnings of a friend.  
Yet, if he shrink from some predicted doom,  
Or if his goddess-mother have revealed  
Aught of Jove's counsels to him, then, at least 975  
Let him send thee to war, and let his troop  
Of Myrmidons go with thee, so that thou  
Mayst carry succor to the Greeks. Yet more, —  
Let him permit thee in the field to wear  
His glorious armor, that the Trojan host, 980  
Beholding thee so like to him, may shun  
The combat, and the warlike sons of Greece,  
Hard-pressed, may breathe again, and find at length  
A respite from the conflict. Ye, who still  
Are fresh and vigorous, shall assault and drive 985  
Townward the weary foe from camp and fleet."

He spake. The spirit of the youth took fire,  
And instantly he hastened toward the ships  
Of Peleus' son. But when he came where lay  
The galleys of Ulysses the divine, 990  
Where was the assembly-place and judgment-seat,  
And where the altars of the immortals stood,  
Evæmon's noble son, Eurypylus,  
Met him as from the battle-field he came  
Halting, and with an arrow in his thigh. 995  
The sweat ran down his shoulders and his brow,  
And the black blood was oozing from his wound,  
Yet was his spirit untamed. The gallant youth,  
Son of Menœtius, saw with grief, and said : —

" Unhappy chiefs and princes of the Greeks ! 1000  
 Are ye then doomed to feast with your fair limbs  
 The famished dogs of Ilium, far away  
 From friends and country ? Tell me, child of Jove,  
 Gallant Eurypylus, will yet the Greeks  
 Withstand the mighty Hector, or give way 1005  
 And perish, overtaken by his spear ? "

And thus the wise Eurypylus replied : —  
 " Nursling of Jove, Patroclus ! for the Greeks  
 There is no help, and all at their black ships  
 Must perish ; for within them even now 1010  
 All those who were our bravest warriors lie,  
 Wounded in close encounter, or from far,  
 By Trojan hands, whose strength with every hour  
 Becomes more terrible. Give now thine aid  
 And take me to my ship, and cut away 1015  
 The arrow from my thigh, and from the part  
 Cleanse with warm water the dark blood, and shed  
 Soothing and healing balms upon the wound,  
 As taught thee by Achilles, who had learned  
 The art from Chiron, righteous in his day 1020  
 Beyond all other Centaurs. Now the leech  
 Machaon lies, I think, among the tents,  
 Wounded, and needs the aid of others' skill,  
 And Podalirius out upon the plain  
 Helps stem the onset of the Trojan host." 1025

Then spake the valiant Menœtiades : —  
 " O brave Eurypylus ! what yet will be  
 The end of this, and what are we to do ?

Even now I bear a message on my way  
From reverend Nestor, guardian of the Greeks, 1030  
To the great warrior, Peleus' son ; and yet  
I must not leave thee in thine hour of need."

He spake ; and, lifting in his arms the prince,  
He bore him to his tent. A servant spread,  
Upon his entering, hides to form a couch ; 1035  
And there Patroclus laid him down and cut  
The rankling arrow from his thigh, and shed  
Warm water on the wound to cleanse away  
The purple blood, and last applied a root  
Of bitter flavor to assuage the smart, 1040  
Bruising it first within his palms : the pangs  
Ceased ; the wound dried ; the blood no longer  
flowed.

## BOOK XII.

THUS in the camp Menœtius' valiant son  
Tended Eurypylus, and dressed his wounds ;  
While yet in mingled throngs the warriors fought, —  
Trojans and Greeks. Nor longer was the trench  
A barrier for the Greeks, nor the broad wall  
Which they had built above it to defend  
Their fleet ; for all around it they had drawn  
The trench, yet not with chosen hecatombs  
Paid to the gods, that so it might protect

The galleys and the heaps of spoil they held. 10  
Without the favor of the gods it rose,  
And therefore was not long to stand entire.  
As long as Hector lived, and Peleus' son  
Was angered, and King Priam's city yet  
Was not o'erthrown, so long the massive wall 15  
Built by the Greeks stood firm. But when at length  
The bravest of the Trojans had been slain,  
And many of the Greeks were dead, — though still  
Others survived, — and when in the tenth year  
The city of Priam fell, and in their ships 20  
The Greeks went back to their beloved land,  
Then did Apollo and the god of sea  
Consult together to destroy the wall  
By turning on it the resistless might  
Of rivers, all that from the Idæan heights 25  
Flow to the ocean, — Rhesus, Granicus,  
Heptaporus, Caresus, Rhodius,  
Æsepus, and Scamander's hallowed stream,  
And Simois, in whose bed lay many shields  
And helms and bodies of slain demigods. 30  
Phœbus Apollo turned the mouths of these  
All toward one spot ; nine days against the wall  
He bade their currents rush, while Jupiter  
Poured constant rain, that floods might overwhelm  
The rampart ; and the god who shakes the earth. 35  
Wielding his trident, led the rivers on.  
He flung among the billows the huge beams  
And stones which, with hard toil, the Greeks had laid

For the foundations. Thus he levelled all  
Beside the hurrying Hellespont, destroyed 40  
The bulwarks utterly, and overspread  
The long broad shore with sand ; and then he  
brought

Again the rivers to the ancient beds  
In which their gently flowing waters ran.

This yet was to be done in time to come 45  
By Neptune and Apollo. Meanwhile raged  
Battle and tumult round that strong-built wall.  
The towers in all their timbers rang with blows ;  
And, driven as by the scourge of Jove, the Greeks,  
Hemmed closely in beside their roomy ships, 50  
Trembled at Hector, the great scatterer  
Of squadrons, fighting, as he did before,  
With all a whirlwind's might. As when a boar  
Or lion mid the hounds and huntsmen stands,  
Fearfully strong, and fierce of eye, and they 55  
In square array assault him, and their hands  
Fling many a javelin ; — yet his noble heart  
Fears not, nor does he fly, although at last  
His courage cause his death ; and oft he turns,  
And tries their ranks ; and where he makes a rush  
The ranks give way ; — so Hector moved and  
turned 60

Among the crowd, and bade his followers cross  
The trench. The swift-paced horses ventured not  
The leap, but stood upon the edge and neighed  
Aloud, for the wide space affrighted them ; 65

And hard it was to spring across, or pass  
From side to side, for on each side the brink  
Was steep, and bristled with sharp stakes, close set  
And strong, which there the warrior sons of Greece  
Had planted, a defence against the foe. 70

No steed that whirled the rapid car along  
Could enter, but the soldiery on foot  
Eagerly sought to pass, and in these words  
Polydamas to daring Hector spake : —

“ Hector, and ye who lead the troops of Troy 75  
And our auxiliars ! rashly do we seek  
To urge our rapid steeds across the trench  
So hard to pass, beset with pointed stakes, —  
And the Greek wall so near. The troops of horse  
Cannot descend nor combat there : the space 80  
Is narrow : they would all be slain. If Jove,  
The Thunderer of the skies, design to crush  
The Greeks and succor Troy, I should rejoice  
Were the design at once fulfilled, and all  
The sons of Greece ingloriously cut off, 85  
Far from their Argos. But if they should turn  
Upon us, and repulse us from their fleet,  
And we become entangled in the trench,  
I deem no messenger would e’er go back  
To Troy from fighting with the rallied Greeks. 90  
Heed, then, my words, and let the charioteers  
Stay with the coursers at the trench, while we,  
Armed, and on foot, and all in close array,  
Follow our Hector. For the Greeks in vain

Will strive to stem our onset if, in truth, 95  
The hour of their destruction be at hand."

So spake Polydamas ; and Hector, pleased  
To hear the prudent counsel, leaped to earth  
With all his arms, and left his car. The rest  
Rode with their steeds no more, but, hastily 100  
Dismounting, as they saw their noble chief,  
Each bade his charioteer hold back his steeds,  
Reined at the trench, in ranks. And then, apart,  
They mustered in five columns, following close  
Their leaders. First, the largest, bravest band, 105  
Those who, with resolute daring, longed to break  
The rampart and to storm the fleet, were led  
By Hector and the good Polydamas,  
Joined with Cebriones, — for Hector left  
His chariot to the care of one who held 110  
An humbler station than Cebriones.  
Paris, Alcathoüs, and Agenor led  
A second squadron. Helenus, a son  
Of Priam, and Deïphobus, a youth  
Of godlike form, his brother; took command 115  
Of yet a third, — with whom in rank was joined  
The hero Asius, son of Hyrtacus,  
Whose bright-haired coursers, of majestic size,  
Had borne him from Arisba and the banks  
Of Selleis. Æneas led the fourth, — 120  
The brave son of Anchises ; and with him  
Were joined Archilochus and Acamas,  
Sons of Antenor, skilled in arts of war.

The band of Troy's illustrious allies  
 Followed Sarpedon, who from all the rest 125  
 Had chosen, to partake in the command,  
 Glaucus and brave Asteropæus. These  
 He deemed the bravest under him ; yet he  
 Stood foremost of them all in warlike might.

Then all, with their stout bucklers of bull's-hide  
 Adjusted to each other, bravely marched 131  
 Against the Greeks, who, as they deemed, must fly  
 Before them, and must fall by their black ships.  
 Then all the other Trojans, and the allies  
 From foreign shores, obeyed the counsel given 135  
 By good Polydamas ; but Asius, son  
 Of Hyrtacus, and prince of men, chose not  
 To leave his chariot and his charioteer,  
 But drave with them against the roomy ships.  
 Vain youth ! — he was not destined to return, 140  
 Borne by his steeds and chariot, from the fleet,  
 And from the fate he braved, to wind-swept Troy.  
 His evil fate o'ertook him from the spear  
 Of great Idomeneus, Deucalion's son ;  
 For toward the galleys moored upon the left 145  
 He hastened by the way in which the Greeks,  
 With steeds and cars, retreated from the plain.  
 Thither he drave his coursers ; there he found  
 The gates not closed, nor the long bar across,  
 But warriors held them open to receive 150  
 In safety their companions as they fled  
 From battle to the fleet. Exultingly

He turned his coursers thither, and his men  
Followed him, shouting ; for they thought the Greeks  
Could not abide their onset, but must yield, 155  
And perish by their ships. Deluded men ! —  
They met two mighty warriors at the gate, —  
The brave descendants of the Lapithæ,  
That warlike tribe : Pirithoüs' gallant son  
Was one, named Polypœtes ; with him stood 160  
Leonteus, strong as Mars the slayer of men.  
By the tall gates they stood, as giant oaks  
Stand on the mountains and abide the wind  
And the tempestuous rains of all the year,  
Firm-planted on their strong and spreading roots. 165  
So they, confiding in their strength of arm,  
Waited for mighty Asius hasting on,  
And fled not. Onward came the hostile troop,  
With their tough shields uplifted, and with shouts :  
All rushing toward the massive wall they came, 170  
Following King Asius, and Iamenus  
Orestes, Thoön, Acamas the son  
Of Asius, and CEnomaüs. Meanwhile  
Leonteus and his comrade had retired  
Within, encouraging the well-armed Greeks 175  
To combat for the fleet ; but when they saw  
The rout and panic of their flying host,  
They darted forth and fought before the gates, —  
Fought like wild boars that in the mountains meet  
A clamorous troop of men and dogs, and dart 180  
Sideway at their assailants, break the trees

Close to the root, and fiercely gnash their tusks,  
Until some javelin strikes them, and they die.  
So on the breasts of the two warriors rang  
The shining brass, oft smitten ; for they fought 185  
Fearlessly, trusting in the aid of those  
Who held the wall, and their own valiant arms.  
And they who stood on the strong towers hurled down  
Stones, to defend the Achæians and their tents  
And their swift ships. As snow-flakes fall to earth 190  
When strong winds, driving on the shadowy cloud,  
Shower them upon the nourishing glebe, so thick  
Were showered the weapons from the hands of  
Greeks

And Trojans ; and the helms and bossy shields,  
Beaten by stones, resounded. Asius then — 195  
The son of Hyrtacus — in anger groaned,  
And smote his thighs impatiently, and said : —

“ O Father Jove ! thou then art wholly false.  
I did not look to see the men of Greece  
Stand thus before our might and our strong arms ; 200  
Yet they, like pliant-bodied wasps or bees,  
That build their cells beside the rocky way,  
And quit not their abode, but, waiting there  
The hunter, combat for their young — so these,  
Although but two, withdraw not from the gates, 205  
Nor will, till they be slain or seized alive.”

He spake ; but moved not thus the will of Jove,  
Who planned to give the glory of the day  
To Hector. Meanwhile, at the other gates

Fought other warriors, — but 't were hard for me, <sup>210</sup>  
Were I a god, to tell of all their deeds ;  
For round the wall on every side there raged,  
Fierce as consuming fire, a storm of stones.  
The Greeks, in bitter anguish, yet constrained,  
Fought for their fleet ; and sorrowful were all <sup>215</sup>  
The gods who in the battle favored Greece.

Now the two Lapithæ began the fight.  
Pirithoüs' son, brave Polypætes, cast  
His spear at Damasus ; it broke its way  
Through the helm's brazen cheek, — nor that alone :  
Right through the temple went the brazen blade, <sup>221</sup>  
And crushed the brain within. He left him slain,  
And next struck Pylon down, and Ormenus.  
Leonteus, of the stock of Mars, assailed  
Hippomachus, who from Antimachus <sup>225</sup>  
Derived his birth ; he pierced him at the belt,  
And, drawing forth his trenchant sword, hewed down,  
In combat hand-to-hand, Antiphates ;  
He dashed him backward to the ground, and next  
Smote Menon and Iamenus ; and last <sup>230</sup>  
He slew Orestes : at his feet they lay,  
A pile of dead, upon their mother Earth.

Then, as the twain were stripping from the dead  
Their glittering arms, the largest, bravest band  
Of those who eagerly desired to break <sup>235</sup>  
The rampart and to burn the ships with fire,  
Following Polydamas and Hector, stood  
Consulting at the trench. An augury,

Just as they were in act to cross, appeared  
 Upon the left : an eagle high in air, 240  
 Between the armies, in his talons bore  
 A monstrous serpent, bleeding, yet alive  
 And palpitating, — nor disabled yet  
 For combat ; for it turned, and on the breast  
 Wounded the eagle, near the neck. The bird 245  
 In pain let fall his prize amid the host,  
 And flew away, with screams, upon the wind.  
 The Trojans shuddered at the spotted snake  
 Lying among them, and Polydamas  
 Said thus to fearless Hector, standing near : — 250  
     “ Hector, thou almost ever chidest me  
 In council, even when I judge aright.  
 I know it ill becomes the citizen  
 To speak against the way that pleases thee,  
 In war or council, — he should rather seek 255  
 To strengthen thy authority ; yet now  
 I will declare what seems to me the best :  
 Let us not combat with the Greeks, to take  
 Their fleet ; for this, I think, will be the end, —  
 If now the omen we have seen be meant 260  
 For us of Troy who seek to cross the trench ; —  
 This eagle, flying high upon the left,  
 Between the hosts, that in his talons bore  
 A monstrous serpent, bleeding, yet alive,  
 Hath dropped it mid our host before he came 265  
 To his dear nest, nor brought it to his brood ; —  
 So we, although by force we break the gates

And rampart, and although the Greeks fall back,  
Shall not as happily retrace our way ;  
For many a Trojan shall we leave behind, 270  
Slain by the weapons of the Greeks, who stand  
And fight to save their fleet. Thus will the seer,  
Skilled in the lore of prodigies, explain  
The portent, and the people will obey."

Sternly the crested Hector looked, and spake :—  
" Polydamas, the thing that thou hast said 276  
Pleases me not, and easily couldst thou  
Frame better counsels. If thy words convey  
Thy earnest thought, the gods assuredly  
Have made thee lose thy senses. Thou dost ask  
That I no longer reverence the decree 281  
Of Jove, the Thunderer of the sky, who gave  
His promise, and confirmed it. Thou dost ask  
That I be governed by the flight of birds,  
Which I regard not, whether to the right 285  
And toward the morning and the sun they fly,  
Or toward the left and evening. We should heed  
The will of mighty Jupiter, who bears  
Rule over gods and men. One augury  
There is, the surest and the best, — to fight 290  
For our own land. Why darest thou the war  
And conflict ? Though we all should fall beside  
The galleys of the Greeks, there is no fear  
That thou wilt perish, for thou hast no heart  
To stand against the foe ;— no warrior thou ! 295  
Yet, if thou dare to stand aloof, or seek

By words to turn another from the fight,  
The spear I wield shall take thy life at once."

He spake, and went before ; and all his band  
Followed with fearful clamor. Jupiter, 300  
The God of thunders, sending a strong wind  
From the Idæan summits, drave the dust  
Full on the galleys, and made faint the hearts  
Of the Greek warriors, and gave new renown  
To Hector and the men of Troy. For these, 305  
Trusting in portents sent from Jupiter,  
And their own valor, labored to break through  
The massive rampart of the Greeks : they tore  
The galleries from the towers, and levelled down  
The breastworks, heaved with levers from their  
place 310

The jutting buttresses which Argive hands  
Had firmly planted to support the towers,  
And brought them to the ground ; and thus they  
hoped

To force a passage to the Grecian camp.  
Not yet did they of Greece give way : they fenced 315  
The rampart with their ox-hide shields, and smote  
The enemy from behind them as he came  
Under the wall. The chieftains Ajax flew  
From tower to tower, and cheered the Achaians on,  
And roused their valor, — some with gentle words,  
And some with harsh rebuke, — whome'er they saw  
Skulk from the toils and dangers of the fight. 322

" O friends ! " they said, " ye great in war, and ye

Of less renown, and ye of little note ! —  
For all are not alike in war, — the time 325  
Demands the aid of all, as well ye know :  
And now let no man turn him toward the fleet  
Before the threats of Hector, but press on,  
And each exhort his fellow : so may Jove,  
Who flings the lightning from Olympus, grant 330  
That, driving back their onset, we may chase  
The enemy to the very walls of Troy.”

Thus in the van they shouted, and awoke  
New courage in the Greeks. As when the flakes  
Of snow fall thick upon a winter-day, 335  
When Jove the Sovereign pours them down on men,  
Like arrows, from above ; — he bids the wind  
Breathe not ; continually he pours them down,  
And covers every mountain-top and peak,  
And flowery mead, and field of fertile tilth, 340  
And sheds them on the havens and the shores  
Of the gray deep ; but there the waters bound  
The covering of snows, — all else is white  
Beneath that fast-descending shower of Jove ; —  
So thick the shower of stones from either side 345  
Flew toward the other, — from the Greeks against  
The Trojans, and from them against the Greeks ;  
And fearful was the din along the wall.

Yet would illustrious Hector and the men  
Of Troy have failed to force the gates and burst 350  
The bar within, had not all-seeing Jove  
Impelled his son Sarpedon to attack

The Greeks as falls a lion on a herd  
 Of hornèd beeves. The warrior held his shield,  
 A brazen orb, before him, — beautiful, 355  
 And fenced with metal ; for the armorer laid  
 Broad plates without, while under these he sewed  
 Bull's-hides the toughest, edged with golden wires  
 Upon the rim. With this the warrior came,  
 Wielding two spears. As when a lion, bred 360  
 Among the mountains, fasting long from flesh,  
 Comes into the fenced pastures, without fear,  
 To prey upon the flock ; and though he meet  
 The shepherds keeping watch with dogs and spears,  
 Yet will he not be driven thence until 365  
 He makes a spring into the fold and bears  
 A sheep away, or in the act is slain,  
 Struck by a javelin from some ready hand ; —  
 Sarpedon, godlike warrior, thus was moved  
 By his great heart to storm the wall and break 370  
 Through the strong barrier ; and to Glaucus, son  
 Of Lycia's king Hippolochus, he said : —

“ Why, Glaucus, are we honored, on the shores  
 Of Lycia, with the highest seat at feasts,  
 And with full cups ? Why look men up to us 375  
 As to the gods ? And why do we possess  
 Broad, beautiful enclosures, full of vines  
 And wheat, beside the Xanthus ? Then it well  
 Becomes us, foremost in the Lycian ranks  
 To stand against the foe, where'er the fight 380  
 Is hottest ; so our well-armed Lycian men

Shall say, and truly : ‘ Not ingloriously  
Our kings bear rule in Lycia, where they feast  
On fatlings of the flock, and drink choice wine ;  
For they excel in valor, and they fight 385  
Among our foremost.’ O my friend, if we,  
Leaving this war, could flee from age and death,  
I should not here be fighting in the van,  
Nor would I send thee to the glorious war  
But now, since many are the modes of death 390  
Impending o’er us, which no man can hope  
To shun, let us press on and give renown  
To other men, or win it for ourselves ! ”

He spake ; and Glaucus not unwillingly  
Heard and obeyed. Right on the warriors pressed,  
Leading the Lycian host. Menestheus, son 396  
Of Peteus, saw, and trembled ; for they came  
With evil menace toward his tower. He looked  
Along the Grecian lines in hope to see  
Some chieftain there whose ready help might save 400  
His comrades from their danger. He beheld  
The rulers Ajax, never tired of war,  
Standing with Teucer, who just then had left  
His tent ; and yet they could not hear his shout,  
So fearful was the din that rose to heaven 405  
From all the shields, and crested helms, and gates,  
Smitten with missiles, — for at all the gates  
The Lycians thundered, struggling hard to break  
A passage through them. Then Menestheus called  
A herald near, and bade Thoötes bear 410

A message to the leaders Ajax, thus : —

“Go, nobly born Thoötes, and in haste  
Call Ajax, — call them both, for that were best, —  
Since terrible will be the slaughter here,  
So fiercely are the Lycians pressing on, 415  
Impetuous ever in assault. If there  
The fight be also urgent, then at least  
Let the brave Telamonian Ajax come,  
And Teucer, the great archer, follow him.

He spake. The herald listened and obeyed, 420  
And flew along the summit of the wall  
Built by the Greeks. He reached, and stood beside,  
The chieftains Ajax, and addressed them thus : —

“Ajaces, leaders of the warlike Greeks,  
The honored son of noble Peteus asks 425  
That ye will come, though for a little space,  
To aid him and to share his warlike toils ;  
For terrible will be the slaughter there,  
So fiercely are the Lycians pressing on,  
Impetuous ever in assault. If here 430  
The fight be also urgent, then at least  
Let the brave Telamonian Ajax come,  
And Teucer, the great archer, follow him.”

He ended. Ajax, son of Telamon,  
Hearkened, and to his fellow-warrior said : — 435

“Here, where the gallant Lycomedes stands,  
Ajax ! remain, and, cheering on the Greeks,  
Lead them to combat valiantly. I go  
To stem the battle there, and when our friends

Are succored I will instantly return." 440

So speaking, Ajax, son of Telamon,  
Departed thence, and with him Teucer, sprung  
From the same father. With them also went  
Pandion, carrying Teucer's crooked bow.  
They came to brave Menestheus at his tower, 445  
And went within the wall and met their friends,  
Hard-pressed, — for gallantly the Lycian chiefs  
And captains, like a gloomy tempest, rushed  
Up the tall breastworks ; while the Greeks withstood  
Their onset, and a mighty clamor rose. 450

Then Telamonian Ajax smote to death  
Epicles, great of soul, Sarpedon's friend :  
Against that chief he cast a huge, rough stone,  
That lay high up beside a pinnacle  
Within the wall. No man with both his hands, — 455  
Such men as now are, — though in prime of youth,  
Could lift its weight ; and yet he wielded it  
Aloft, and flung it. Through the four-coned helm  
It crashed, and brake the skull within. Down plunged  
The Lycian, like a diver, from his place 460  
On the high tower, and life forsook his limbs.  
Then Teucer also wounded with a shaft  
Glaucus, the brave son of Hippolochus,  
As he leaped forth to scale the lofty wall, —  
Wounded him where the naked arm was seen, 465  
And made him leave the combat. Back he sprang,  
Hiding amid the crowd, that so the Greeks  
Might not behold the wounded limb, and scoff.

With grief Sarpedon saw his friend withdraw,  
 Yet paused not from the conflict, but took aim 470  
 At Thestor's son, Alcmaon, with his spear ;  
 Pierced him ; and drew the weapon out. The Greek,  
 Following the spear, fell headlong ; and his arms,  
 Studded with brass, clashed round him as he fell.  
 Then did Sarpedon seize, with powerful hands, 475  
 The battlement ; he wrenched it, and it came  
 To earth, and laid the rampart's summit bare,  
 To make a passage for the assailing host.  
 Ajax and Teucer saw, and both took aim  
 Together at Sarpedon : Teucer's shaft 480  
 Struck in the midst the buckler's glittering belt,  
 Just at the bosom ; but Jove warded off  
 The death-stroke from his son, lest he should fall  
 Beside the galleys. Ajax, springing, struck  
 The buckler with his spear, and pierced its folds, 485  
 And checked the eager warrior, who gave way  
 A little, yet retreated not, but turned,  
 Encouraging the godlike Lycians thus : —

“ Where, Lycians, is your fiery valor now ?  
 Were I the bravest, it were hard, alone, 90  
 For me to force a passage to the fleet,  
 Though I have cleared the way. Come on with me !  
 Light is the task when many share the toil.”

He spake ; and they who revered his words  
 Of exhortation drew more closely round 495  
 Their counsellor and sovereign, while the Greeks  
 Above them made their phalanxes more strong

Within the wall, — for urgent was the need ;  
Since neither could the gallant Lycians break  
The barrier of the Greeks, and cut their way 500  
Through to the fleet, nor could the warlike Greeks  
Drive back the Lycians when they once had reached  
The rampart. As two men upon a field,  
With measuring-rods in hand, disputing stand  
Over the common boundary, in small space, 505  
Each one contending for the right he claims,  
So, kept asunder by the breastwork, fought  
The warriors over it, and fiercely struck  
The orbèd bull's-hide shields held up before  
The breast, and the light targets. Many a one 510  
Was smitten when he turned and showed the back  
Unarmed, and many wounded through the shield.  
The towers and battlements were steeped in blood  
Of heroes, — Greeks and Trojans. Yet were not  
The Greeks thus put to flight ; but, as the scales 515  
Are held by some just woman, who maintains,  
By spinning wool, her household, — carefully  
She poises both the wool and weights, to make  
The balance even, that she may provide  
A pittance for her babes, — thus equally 520  
Were matched the warring hosts, till Jupiter  
Conferred the eminent glory of the day  
On Hector, son of Priam. He it was  
Who first leaped down into the space within  
The Grecian wall, and, with far-reaching voice, 525  
Thus shouted, calling to the men of Troy : —

“Rush on, ye knights of Troy ! rush boldly on,  
And break your passage through the Grecian wall,  
And hurl consuming flames against their fleet !”

So spake he, cheering on his men. They heard,  
And rushed in mighty throngs against the wall, 531  
And climbed the battlements, to charge the foe  
With spears. Then Hector stooped, and seized a  
stone

Which lay before the gate, broad at the base 534  
And sharp above, which two, the strongest men, —  
As men are now, — could hardly heave from earth  
Into a wain. With ease he lifted it,  
Alone, and brandished it : such strength the son  
Of Saturn gave him, that it seemed but light.  
As when a shepherd carries home with ease 540  
A wether's fleece, — he bears it in one hand,  
And little is he cumbered with its weight, —  
So Hector bore the lifted stone, to break  
The beams that strengthened the tall folding-gates.  
Two bars within, laid crosswise, held them firm, — 545  
Both fastened with one bolt. He came and stood  
Before them ; with wide-parted feet he stood,  
And put forth all his strength, that so his arm  
Might drive the missile home ; and in the midst  
He smote the folding-gates. The blow tore off 550  
The hinges ; heavily the great stone fell  
Within : the portals crashed ; nor did the bars  
Withstand the blow : the shattered beams gave way  
Before it ; and illustrious Hector sprang

Into the camp. His look was stern as night ; 555  
And terribly the brazen armor gleamed  
That swathed him. With two spears in hand he  
came,  
And none except the gods — when once his foot  
Was on the ground — could stand before his might.  
His eyes shot fire, and, turning to his men, 560  
He bade them mount the wall ; and they obeyed :  
Some o'er the wall, some through the sculptured gate,  
Poured in. The Achaians to their roomy ships  
Fled, and a fearful uproar filled the air.

THE ILIAD OF HOMER.

VOL. II.



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## BOOK XIII.

WHEN Jove had brought the Trojans and  
their chief,

Hector, beside the ships, he left them there  
To toil and struggle and endure, while he  
Turned his resplendent eyes upon the land  
Of Thracian horsemen, and the Mysians, skilled 5  
To combat hand to hand, and the famed tribe  
Of long-lived Hippomulgi, reared on milk,  
And the most just of men. On Troy no more  
He turned those glorious eyes, for now he deemed  
That none of all the gods would seek to aid 10  
Either the Greeks or Trojans in the strife.

The monarch Neptune kept no idle watch ;  
For he in Thracian Samos, dark with woods,  
Aloft upon the highest summit sat,  
O'erlooking thence the tumult of the war ; 15  
For thence could he behold the Idæan mount,  
And Priam's city, and the Grecian fleet.  
There, coming from the ocean-deeps, he sat,

And pitied the Greek warriors put to rout  
Before the Trojans, and was wroth with Jove. 20  
Soon he descended from those rugged steeps,  
And trod the earth with rapid strides ; the hills  
And forests quaked beneath the immortal feet  
Of Neptune as he walked. Three strides he took,  
And at the fourth reached Ægæ, where he stopped,  
And where his sumptuous palace-halls were built, 25  
Deep down in ocean, golden, glittering, proof  
Against decay of time. These when he reached,  
He yoked his swift and brazen-footed steeds,  
With manes of flowing gold, to draw his car, 30  
And put on golden mail, and took his scourge,  
Wrought of fine gold, and climbed the chariot-seat,  
And rode upon the waves. The whales came forth  
From their deep haunts, and frolicked round his way :  
They knew their king. The waves rejoicing smoothed  
A path, and rapidly the coursers flew ; 35  
Nor was the brazen axle wet below.

And thus they brought him to the Grecian fleet.

Deep in the sea there is a spacious cave,  
Between the rugged Imbrus and the isle 40  
Of Tenedos. There Neptune, he who shakes  
The shores, held back his steeds, took off their yoke,  
Gave them ambrosial food, and, binding next  
Their feet with golden fetters which no power  
Might break or loosen, so that they might wait 45  
Their lord's return, he sought the Grecian host.

Still did the Trojans, rushing on in crowds,

Like flames or like a tempest, follow close  
 Hector, the son of Priam ; still their rage  
 Abated not ; with stormy cries they came ; 50  
 They hoped to seize the fleet and slay the Greeks  
 Beside it. But the power who swathes the earth  
 And shakes it, Neptune, coming from the deep,  
 Revived the valor of the Greeks. He took  
 The shape of Calchas and his powerful voice, 55  
 And thus to either Ajax, who yet stemmed  
 The battle with a resolute heart, he spake : —

“O chieftains ! yours it is to save the host,  
 Recalling your old valor, with no thought  
 Of fatal flight. Elsewhere I feel no dread 60  
 Of what the daring sons of Troy may do  
 Who climb the wall in throngs ; the well-greaved  
 Greeks

Will meet them bravely. But where Hector leads,  
 Fierce as a flame, his squadrons, he who boasts  
 To be a son of sovereign Jove, I fear 65  
 Lest we should sorely suffer. May the gods  
 Strengthen your hearts to stand against the foe,  
 And flinch not, and exhort the rest to stand,  
 And drive him back, audacious as he is,  
 From the swift ships, though Jove should urge him  
 on.” 70

Thus earth-surrounding Neptune said, and  
 touched  
 Each hero with his sceptre, filled their hearts  
 With valor, gave new lightness to their limbs

And feet and hands, and then, as when a hawk  
Shoots swiftly from some lofty precipice 75  
And chases o'er the plain another bird,  
So swiftly Neptune, shaker of the shores,  
Darted from them away. Oileus' son  
Perceived the immortal presence first, and thus  
At once to Telamonian Ajax spake : — 80

“ Some god, O Ajax, from the Olympian hill,  
Wearing the augur's form, hath bid us fight  
Beside the ships ; nor can it be the seer  
Calchas, for well I marked his feet and legs  
As he departed ; easily by these 85  
The gods are known. I feel a spirit roused  
In my own bosom eager to engage  
In the fierce strife ; my very feet below,  
And hands above, take part in the desire.”

And thus the son of Telamon replied : — 90  
“ So also these strong hands that grasp the spear  
Burn eagerly to wield it, and my heart  
Is full of courage. I am hurried on  
By both my feet, and vehemently long  
To try alone the combat with this chief 95  
Of boundless valor, Hector, Priam's son.”

Thus they conferred, rejoicing as they felt  
That ardor for the battle which the god  
Had breathed into their hearts. Meantime he roused  
The Achaians at the rear, who in their ships 100  
Sought respite, and whose limbs were faint with toil,  
And their hearts sad to see the Trojan host

With tumult pouring o'er the lofty wall.  
As they beheld, the tears came gushing forth  
From underneath their lids ; they little hoped 105  
For rescue from destruction ; but when came  
The power that shakes the shores, he woke anew  
The spirit of their valiant phalanxes.  
Teucer he first addressed, and Leïtus,  
The hero Peneleus and Thoas next, 110  
Deipyrus, Meriones expert  
In battle, and Antilochus his peer,  
And thus exhorted them with wingèd words : —  
“ Shame on you, Argive youths ! I put my trust  
In your tried valor to defend our fleet ; 115  
But if ye fear to face the perilous fight,  
The day has risen which shall behold us fall  
Vanquished before the Trojans. O ye gods !  
These eyes have seen a marvel, a strange sight  
And terrible, which I had never thought 120  
Could be, — the Trojans close upon our ships,  
They who, erewhile, were like the timid deer  
That wander in the wood an easy préy  
To jackals, pards, and wolves, — weak things, unapt  
For combat, fleeing, but without an aim. 125  
Such were the Trojans, who till now ne'er dared  
Withstand the might and prowess of the Greeks  
Even for an hour. But now, afar from Troy  
They give us battle at the hollow ships,  
All through our general's fault, and through the sloth  
Of the Greek warriors, who, displeased with him, 131

Fight not for their swift galleys, but are slain  
Beside them. Yet although our sovereign chief,  
Atrides Agamemnon, may have done  
Foul wrong, dishonoring the swift-footed son 135  
Of Peleus, still ye cannot without blame  
Decline the combat. Let us then repair  
The mischief done ; the hearts of valiant men  
Are soon appeased. And not without the loss  
Of honor can your fiery courage sleep, 140  
Since ye are known the bravest of the host.  
I would not chide the weak, unwarlike man  
For shrinking from the combat ; but for you, —  
I look on you with anger in my heart.  
Weaklings ! ye soon will bring upon yourselves 145  
Some sorer evil if ye loiter thus.  
Let each of you bethink him of the shame  
And infamy impending. Terrible  
The struggle is before us. Hector storms  
The ships, loud-shouting Hector ; he has burst 150  
The gate and broken the protecting bar.”

So Neptune spake, encouraging the Greeks.  
While firmly stood the serried phalanxes  
Round either Ajax, nor could Mars himself,  
Nor Pallas, musterer of armed hosts, 155  
Reprove their order. There the flower of Greece  
Waited the Trojans and their noble chief,  
Spear beside spear, and shield by shield, so close  
That buckler pressed on buckler, helm on helm,  
And man on man. The plumes of horse-hair touched

Each other as they nodded on the crests 161  
 Of the bright helmets, so close the warriors stood.  
 The lances quivered in the fearless hands  
 Of warriors eager to advance and strike  
 The enemy. But the men of Troy began 165  
 The assault ; the fiery Hector was the first  
 To rush against the Greeks. As when a stone  
 Rolls from a cliff before a wintry flood  
 That sweeps it down the steep, when mighty rains  
 Have worn away the props that held it fast ; 170  
 It rolls and bounds on high ; the woods around  
 Crash, as it tears its unresisted way  
 Along the slope until it reach the plain,  
 And there, however urged, moves on no more ; —  
 So Hector, menacing to cut his way 175  
 Through tents and galleys to the very sea,  
 Slaying as he went forward, when he now  
 Met the firm phalanxes and pressed them close,  
 Stopped suddenly ; the sons of Greece withstood  
 His onset and repulsed it, striking him 180  
 Withswords and two-edged spears, and made the chief  
 Give way before the shock. He lifted up  
 His voice and shouted to the Trojans thus : —  
 “ Trojans and Lycians and Dardanians skilled  
 In fighting hand to hand, stand firm. Not long 185  
 Will the Greeks bide my onset, though drawn up  
 Square as a tower in close array. My spear,  
 I trust, will scatter them, if true it be  
 That Juno's husband, Sovereign of the gods,

And Lord of thunders, prompts my arm to-day." 192

He spake, and kindled in the breasts of all  
 Fresh courage. In the band Deiphobus  
 Marched proudly, Priam's son, with his round shield  
 Before him, walking with a quick, light step  
 Behind its shelter. Then Meriones 195  
 Aimed at the chief his glittering spear; the point  
 Missed not; it struck the orb of bullock's hide,  
 Yet did not pierce it, for the weapon broke  
 Just at the neck. Deiphobus held forth  
 His shield far from him, dreading to receive 200  
 A spear-thrust from the brave Meriones.  
 Vexed thus to lose the victory, and the spear  
 Snapped by the blow, Meriones fell back  
 Into the column of his friends, and passed  
 Hastily toward the camp and ships, to bring 205  
 A powerful spear that stood within his tent,  
 While others fought, and fearful was the din.

Then Teucer first, the son of Telamon,  
 Smote gallant Imbrius, son of Mentor, lord  
 Of many steeds. He, ere the Greeks had come 210  
 To Troy, dwelt at Pedæum and espoused  
 Medesicasta, Priam's spurious child.  
 But when the well-oared galleys of the Greeks  
 Mustered at Troy, he also came, and there  
 Was eminent among her chiefs, and dwelt 215  
 With Priam, and was honored as his son.  
 The son of Telamon beneath the ear  
 Pierced him with his long javelin, and drew forth

The weapon. Headlong to the earth he fell.  
 As on a mountain height, descried from far, 220  
 Hewn by a brazen axe, an ash is felled  
 And lays its tender sprays upon the ground,  
 Thus Imbrius fell, and round him in his fall  
 Clashed his bright armor. Teucer sprang in haste  
 To spoil the dead, but Hector hurled at him  
 His shining spear ; the wary Teucer stepped  
 Aside, and just escaped the brazen blade.  
 It struck Amphimachus, Cteatus' son,  
 And Actor's grandson ; as he came to join  
 The battle, he was smitten in the breast, 230  
 And fell, his armor clashing round his limbs.  
 Then Hector flew in haste to tear away  
 From the large-souled Amphimachus the helm  
 That cased his temples. Ajax saw, and hurled  
 His glittering spear at Hector as he came : 235  
 It made no wound ; for Hector stood equipped  
 All o'er in formidable brass. The spear  
 Struck on the bossy shield with such a shock  
 As forced him to recoil, and leave unspoiled  
 The bodies, which the Achaians dragged away. 240  
 For Stichius and Menestheus, chief among  
 The Athenians, bore the dead Amphimachus  
 To the Greek camp, while the two men of might,  
 The chieftains Ajax, lifted Imbrius up ;  
 And as two lions, bearing off among 245  
 The close-grown shrubs a goat, which they have  
 snatched

From sharp-toothed dogs, uplift it in their jaws  
Above the ground, so the two warriors raised  
The corpse of Imbrius, and stripped off the mail,  
While, angered that Amphimachus was slain, 250  
Oileus' son struck from the tender neck  
The head, and sent it far among the crowd,  
Whirled like a ball, to fall at Hector's feet.

Meantime was Neptune moved with grief to see  
His grandson perish in that desperate fray, 255  
And passed among the Achaian tents and ships  
Encouraging the men, and planning woes  
For Ilium. There he met Idomeneus,  
Expert to wield the spear, as he returned  
From caring for a comrade who had left 260  
The battle, wounded in the knee, and whom  
His friends had carried in. Idomeneus  
Had called the surgeons to his aid, and now  
Was hastening to the field, intent to bear  
His part in battle. Him the monarch god 265  
Of ocean thus addressed, but first he took  
The voice of Thoas, King Andræmon's son,  
Whose father ruled the Ætolians through the bounds  
Of Pleuron, and in lofty Calydon,  
And like a god was honored in the land. 270

“O counsellor of Crete, Idomeneus!  
Where are the threats which late the sons of Greece  
Uttered against the Trojans?” Promptly came  
The Cretan leader's answer: “No man here,  
O Thoas, seems blameworthy, for we all 275

Are skilled in war, nor does unmanly fear  
 Hold any back ; nor from the difficult strife  
 Does sloth detain one warrior. So it is  
 Doubtless that it seems good to Saturn's son,  
 The All-disposer, that the Greeks, afar 280  
 From Argos, should ingloriously fall  
 And perish. Thoas, thou wert ever brave,  
 And didst exhort the laggards. Cease not now  
 To combat, cease not to exhort the rest."

And Neptune, he who shakes the earth, re-  
 joined : — 285

"Idomeneus, whoever keeps aloof  
 From battle, willingly, to-day, may he  
 Never return from Troy, but be the prey  
 Of dogs. Take thou thy arms and come with me,  
 For we must quit ourselves like men, and strive 290  
 To aid our cause, although we be but two.  
 Great is the strength of feeble arms combined,  
 And we can combat even with the brave."

So speaking, Neptune turned to share the toils  
 Of war. Idomeneus, who now had reached 295  
 His princely tent, put on his glorious mail,  
 And seized two spears, and flew upon his way,  
 Like lightning grasped by Saturn's son and flung  
 Quivering above Olympus' gleaming peak,  
 A sign to mortals, dazzled by the blaze, 300  
 So glittered, as he ran, his brazen mail.  
 His fellow-warrior, good Meriones,  
 Met him beside the tent, for he had come

To fetch a brazen javelin thence, and thus  
The stout Idomeneus addressed his friend : — 305

“ O son of Molus, swift Meriones,  
Dearest of all my comrades ! Why hast thou  
Thus left the battle-field ? Hast thou a wound, —  
A weapon's point that galls thee ? Dost thou bring  
A message to me ? Think not that I sit 310  
Within my tent an idler : I must fight.”

Discreetly did Meriones reply : —  
“ Idomeneus, whose sovereign counsels rule  
The well-armed Cretans, I am come to seek  
A spear if one be left within thy tents. 315  
I broke the one I bore, in hurling it  
Against the shield of fierce Deiphobus.”

The Cretan chief, Idomeneus, rejoined : —  
“ If spears thou seek, there stand within my tent  
Twenty and one against the shining walls. 320  
I took them from slain Trojans. 'T is my wont  
Never to fight at distance from the foe,  
And therefore have I spears, and bossy shields,  
And helms, and body-mail of polished brass.”

Then spake in turn discreet Meriones : — 325  
“ Within my tent are also many spoils  
Won from the Trojans, and in my black ship ;  
But they are far away. I do not think  
That I forget what valor is. I fight  
Among the foremost in the glorious strife 330  
Where'er the battle calls me. Other men  
Among the well-armed Greeks may not have seen

What I perform, but thou must know me well."

Idomeneus, the Cretan leader, spake : —

" I know thy courage well. What need hast thou 335

To speak as thou hast done ? If all of us,

The bravest of the Greeks, were set apart

To form an ambush ; — for an ambush tries

And shows men's valor ; there the craven, there

The brave, is known ; the coward's color comes 340

And goes ; his spirit is not calm within

His bosom, so that he can rest awhile

And tremble not ; he shifts his place ; he sits

On both his feet ; his heart beats audibly

Within his breast ; his teeth at thought of death 345

Chatter ; the brave man's color changes not,

Nor when with other warriors he sits down

In ambush is he troubled, but he longs

To rise and mingle in the desperate fray ; —

For thee, in such an ambush, none could blame 350

Thy courage or thy skill. If there the foe

Should wound thee from afar, or smite thee near,

The weapon would not strike thy neck behind,

Or pierce thy back, but enter at thy breast

Or stomach, as thou wert advancing fast 355

Among the foremost. But enough of this.

Come ! stand we here no longer, idiot-like,

Lest some one chide us sharply. Hasten thou,

And bring a sturdy javelin from the tent."

He spake. Meriones, like Mars in port 360

And swiftness, hastened to the tent and brought

A brazen spear, and joined Idomeneus,  
Eager for battle. As the god of war,  
The man-destroyer, comes into the field,  
With Terror, his strong-limbed and dauntless son, 365  
Following and striking fear into the heart  
Of the most resolute warrior, when from Thrace  
They issue armed against the Ephyri,  
Or else against the Phlegyans large of soul,  
And hearken not to both the hosts, but give 370  
To one the victory ; so Meriones  
Advanced to battle with Idomeneus,  
Leaders of heroes both, and both equipped  
In glittering helms. And first Meriones  
Spake and addressed his fellow-warrior thus : — 375

“ Son of Deucalion, at which point wilt thou  
Enter the throng ? Upon the army’s right,  
Its centre, or its left ? The long-haired Greeks  
Seem most to need our aid upon the left.”

Then spoke Idomeneus, in turn, the prince 380  
Of Cretans : “ At the centre of the fleet  
Are others who will guard it. Posted there  
Are either Ajax and the most expert  
Of Grecian archers, Teucer, not less skilled  
In standing fight, and amply will they task 385  
The arm of Hector, Priam’s son, though bent  
On desperate conflict, and though passing fierce.  
With all his fierceness, he will find it hard  
To quell their prowess, never yet o’ercome,  
And fire the ships, unless Saturnian Jove 390

Himself should cast on them the flaming torch.  
Nor yet will Telamonian Ajax yield  
To any man of mortal birth, or reared  
Upon the grains of Ceres, or whom brass  
Or ponderous stones can wound. He would not own  
The warlike son of Peleus mightier 396  
Than he in standing fight, although in speed  
He vies not with him. Lead us then to join  
The army's left, that we may learn at once  
Whether our fate in battle shall confer 400  
Glory on other men, or theirs on us."

So spake the chief. Meriones, the peer  
Of Mars in swiftness, hastened till he joined  
The army where his comrade bade. The foe  
Beheld Idomeneus, who like a flame 405  
Swept on with his companion all in arms  
Gloriously wrought ; they raised from rank to rank  
The battle-cry, and met him as he came,  
And hand to hand, before the galleys' sterns  
Was waged the combat. As when storms arise, 410  
Blown up by piping winds, when dust lies loose  
Along the roads, a spreading cloud of dust  
Fills the wide air, so came the battle on  
Between the bands that struggled eagerly  
To slay each other. All along the line 415  
The murderous conflict bristled with long spears  
That tore the flesh ; the brazen splendor, shot  
From gleaming helmets and from burnished mail  
And shining bucklers, all in narrow space,

Dazzled the eyes. Brave-hearted would he be, 420  
The man who, gazing on it, could have seen  
The furious strife rejoicing or unmoved.

Meantime the potent sons of Saturn each  
Favored a different side, and planned new toils  
For all the warriors. Jupiter had willed 425  
That Hector and the Trojans should prevail,  
Yet had he not decreed the Achaian host  
To perish before Troy ; he only sought  
To honor Thetis and her large-souled son.  
But Neptune, mingling with the Greeks, aroused 430  
Their martial spirit. From the hoary deep  
He came unmarked, for deeply was he grieved  
To see the Greeks give way before the host  
Of Troy, and he was wroth with Jupiter.  
Both gods were of one race, and owed their birth 435  
To the same parents ; but the elder-born  
Was Jupiter, and wiser. For that cause  
Not openly did Neptune aid the Greeks,  
But, as by stealth, disguised in human form,  
Moved through their army and encouraged them 440  
To combat. Thus it was the potent twain  
Each drew, with equal hand, the net of strife  
And fearful havoc, which no power could break  
Or loosen, stretched o'er both the warring hosts,  
And laying many a warrior low in death. 445  
And now, although his brows were strewn with gray,  
Idomeneus, encouraging the Greeks,  
Rushed on the Trojans, and revived the fight.

He slew Orthryoneus, who just before,  
Drawn by the rumor of the war, had left 450  
Cabesus, and now made a lover's suit  
For Priam's fairest daughter. Without dower  
He sought to wed Cassandra, promising  
A vast exploit, — to drive the Greeks from Troy,  
In spite of all their valor. The old king 455  
Consented that the maiden should be his ;  
And now he fought, and trusted to fulfil  
His promise. But Idomeneus took aim,  
And cast his glittering javelin at the youth.  
It struck him marching proudly on, nor stopped 460  
The weapon at the brazen mail, but pierced  
The stomach. With a clash the warrior fell,  
And thus the victor boasted over him : —

“ Orthryoneus, I deem thee worthy of praise  
Beyond all other men, if thou perform 465  
What thou hast undertaken, — to defend  
Dardanian Priam, who has promised thee  
His daughter. We would make a compact too,  
And will perform it, — to bestow on thee  
A spouse, the fairest daughter of the house 470  
Of Atreus' son, and we will send for her  
To Argos, if thou join us, and lay waste  
The well-built Ilium. Now, then, follow me,  
And at the ships which brought us we will treat  
Of marriage, and will make no niggard terms.” 475

So spake Idomeneus, and dragged the slain  
Through the sharp conflict by the foot. He met

Asius, who walked before his car, and came  
To avenge his friend. The attending charioteer  
Behind him reined the steeds, that they should  
breathe

480

Over the shoulders of their lord, who sought  
To smite Idomeneus. The Greek was first  
To strike ; he plunged the spear into his throat  
Below the chin, and drove the weapon through.  
The Trojan fell to earth as falls an oak,  
Poplar, or stately pine, which woodmen fell  
With their sharp axes on the mountain-side,  
To form a galley's beam. So there he lay  
Stretched out before his coursers and his car,  
And gnashed his teeth, and clenched the bloody dust.  
The charioteer, amazed, and losing power  
Of action, dared not turn the horses back  
To bear him from the foe. Antilochus  
The warlike cast his spear, and in the midst  
Transfixed him. Little did the brazen mail  
Avail to stay the blade, which cleft its way  
Into the stomach. With a sudden gasp  
He toppled from the sumptuous chariot-seat,  
And large-souled Nestor's son, Antilochus,  
Drove with the chariot to the well-armed Greeks.  
Deiphobus, who sorrowed for the fate  
Of Asius, drawing near Idomeneus,  
Hurled at him his bright spear. The Greek beheld,  
As face to face they stood, and scaped the stroke,  
Covered by his round shield, two-handled, strong,

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With bullocks' hides and glittering brass. With this  
He hid himself, close couched within, and turned  
The brazen point aside. The buckler rang  
Shrilly; the weapon glanced away, yet flew  
Not vainly from the Trojan's powerful hand : 510  
It struck Hypsenor, son of Hippiasus,  
The shepherd of the people, on the side  
Where lies the liver, just below the breast.  
His knees gave way ; he fell ; Deiphobus  
Thus shouted o'er the dead his empty boast : — 515

“ Not unavenged lies Asius, and no doubt,  
In journeying to the massy gates and wall  
Of Hades, will rejoice that I have sent  
A soul to be companion of his way.”

He spake ; and at his boast the Greeks were  
moved 520

With anger, — most of all Antilochus  
The warlike ; yet he left not to the foe  
His slain companion, but made haste to hold  
His shield above him. His beloved friends,  
Mecisteus, son of Echius, and the prince 525  
Alastor, lifted up, with many a groan,  
The corpse, and bore it to the roomy ships.

Meantime the valor of Idomeneus  
Remitted not ; he vehemently longed  
To cover many a Trojan with the night 530  
Of death, or fall himself with clashing arms,  
In warring to defend the ships of Greece.  
The brave Alcathoüs, the beloved son

Of Æsyetus, whom Anchises made  
His son-in-law, — for he had given to him 535  
Hippodameia, eldest-born of all  
His daughters, whom her parents, while she dwelt  
With them, loved dearly, fair and wise beyond  
All other maidens of her age, and skilled  
In household arts ; so that the noblest prince 540  
Of the broad Trojan kingdom made her his ; —  
Him, by the weapon of Idomeneus,  
Did Neptune bring to death. The sparkling eyes  
Grew dim, and stiffened were the shapely limbs,  
For neither could he flee nor turn aside ; 545  
But as he stood before him, column-like,  
Or like a towering tree, Idomeneus  
Transfixed him in the bosom with his spear  
The brazen coat of mail gave way, which oft  
Had saved him, breaking with a sharp, shrill sound  
Before the severing blade. He fell to earth 551  
With noise ; the spear stood planted in his heart,  
And as he panted quivered through its length,  
Yet soon its murderous force was spent and still.  
And then the victor boasted thus aloud : — 555  
“ Deiphobus, does this appear to thee  
A fair return, when three are slain for one,  
Or hast thou boasted idly ? Yet do thou,  
Vain as thou art, stand forth and face me here,  
And I will teach thee of what race I am, — 560  
An offshoot of the stock of Jove, whose son  
Was Minos, guardian of our Crete, and he

Was father of the good Deucalion.

Deucalion's son am I, and I am king  
O'er many men in the broad isle of Crete. 565  
My galleys brought me thence to be the dread  
Of thee, thy father, and the men of Troy."

He spake. Deiphobus, irresolute,  
Stood doubting whether to retreat and bring  
Some other of the heroic sons of Troy 570  
To aid him, or to try the fight alone.

As thus he mused, it seemed most wise to seek  
Æneas. Him he found withdrawn among  
The rear of the army, for he was displeased  
With noble Priam, who had paid his worth 575  
With light esteem. Deiphobus approached,  
And thus with wingèd words accosted him : —

"Æneas, counsellor of Troy, if thou  
Hadst ever a regard to him who was  
Thy sister's husband, it becomes thee now 580  
To avenge him. Follow me, and help avenge  
Alcathoüs, guardian of thy tender years,  
Slain by the spear of famed Idomeneus."

He spake ; and at his words Æneas felt  
His courage rise. Impatient for the fight, 585  
He went to meet Idomeneus ; yet fear  
Fell not upon the Greek as if he were  
A puny boy : he stood and kept his ground.  
As, when a mountain boar, unterrified,  
Waits in the wilderness the hunter-crew, 590  
That come with mighty din, his bristly back

Rises, his eyes shoot fire, he whets his tusks,  
And fiercely keeps both dogs and men at bay, —  
So did Idomeneus, expert to wield  
The spear, await Æneas hastening on 595  
With fury. Not a backward step he made,  
But called upon his warrior-friends aloud,  
Looking at Aphareus, Ascalaphus,  
Deïpyrus, Meriones, and last  
Antilochus, all skilled in arts of war, 600  
And thus exhorted them with wingèd words : —  
“ Haste hither, O my friends, and bring me aid.  
I stand alone, in dread of the approach  
Of swift Æneas, who comes fiercely on,  
Powerful to slay, and in his prime of youth, 605  
The highest vigor of the human frame.  
Yet, were our years the same, that chief or I  
Would quickly triumph at the other's cost.”  
He spake, and all with one accord drew near  
And stood by him, with shields obliquely held 610  
Upon their shoulders. On the other side  
Æneas cheered his comrades on. He fixed  
His look on Paris, and Deiphobus,  
And nobly born Agenor, who, like him,  
Were leaders of the Trojans. After these 615  
The soldiers followed, as the thronging flock  
Follow the ram that leads them to the fount  
From pasture, and the shepherd's heart is pleased.  
So was Æneas glad at heart to see  
The multitude of warriors following him. 620

Then mingled they in battle hand to hand  
Around Alcathoüs, with their ponderous spears,  
And fearfully upon their bosoms rang  
The brass, as through the struggling crowd they  
aimed

Their weapons at each other. Two brave men, 625  
Æneas and Idomeneus, the peers

Of Mars, conspicuous o'er their fellows, strove  
With cruel brass to rend each other's limbs.

And first Æneas cast his spear to smite

Idomeneus, who saw it as it came, 630

And shunned it. Plunging in the earth beyond,

It stood and quivered ; it had left in vain

The Trojan's powerful hand. Idomeneus

Next smote CEnomaüs : the spear brake through

His hollow corselet at the waist ; it pierced 635

And drank the entrails : down amid the dust

He fell, and grasped the earth with dying hand.

Idomeneus plucked forth the massy spear,

But, pressed by hostile weapons, ventured not

To strip the sumptuous armor from the dead ; 640

Since now no more the sinews of his feet

Were firm to bear him rushing to retake

His spear, or start aside from hostile spears.

Wherefore in standing fight he warded off

The evil hour, nor trusted to his feet 645

To bear him fleetly from the field. He moved

Slowly away, and now Deiphobus,

Who long had hated him and bitterly,

Aimed at him his bright spear ; it missed its mark,  
And struck Ascalaphus, the son of Mars. 650

The weapon cleft the shoulder of the Greek,  
Who fell amid the dust, and clenched the earth.

Not yet the clamorous Mars, of passionate mood,  
Had heard that in the fray his son was slain ;

But on the summit of the Olympian mount 655

He sat, o'ercanopied by golden clouds,  
Restrained from combat by the will of Jove,  
With other gods, forbidden, like himself,  
To aid the combatants. Meantime around

Ascalaphus the combat hand to hand 660

Still raged. Deiphobus had torn away  
The slain man's shining helm, when suddenly  
Meriones sprang forward, spear in hand,  
And smote him on the arm ; the wounded limb

Let fall the helm, resounding as it fell, 665

And with a vulture's leap Meriones  
Rushed toward him, plucking out from the torn flesh  
The spear, and falling back among the crowd.

Polites, brother of the wounded, threw  
Both arms around his waist, and bore him off 670

From the loud din of conflict, till he reached  
His swift-paced steeds, that waited in the rear  
Of battle, with their chariot nobly wrought  
And charioteer. These took him back to Troy,

Heavily groaning and in pain, the blood 675

Yet gushing from the newly wounded limb.

Still fought the other warriors, and the noise

Of a perpetual tumult filled the air.

Æneas, rushing upon Aphareus,

Caletor's son, who turned to face him, thrust 680

A sharp spear through his throat. With drooping  
head,

And carrying shield and helmet to the ground,

He fell, and rendered up his soul in death.

Antilochus, as Thoön turned away,

Attacked and smote him, cutting off the vein 685

That passes through the body to the neck.

This he divided sheer ; the warrior fell

Backward, and lay in dust, with hands outstretched

To his beloved friends. Antilochus

Flew to the slain, and from his shoulders stripped 690

The armor, casting cautious glances round ;

While toward him pressed the Trojans on all sides,

Striking the fair broad buckler with their darts,

Yet could not even score with pointed brass

The tender skin of Nestor's son ; for still 695

Neptune, the shaker of the sea-coast, kept

Watch o'er him while the weapons round him show-  
ered.

Yet he withdrew not from his foes, but moved

Among the crowd, nor idle was his spear,

But wielded right and left, and still he watched 700

With resolute mind the time to strike the foe

At distance, or assault him near at hand.

The son of Asius, Adamas, beheld

The hero meditating thus, and struck,

In close attack, the middle of his shield 705  
With a sharp brazen spear. The dark-haired god  
Who rules the deep denied to Adamas  
The life he sought, and weakened the hard stroke.  
Part of the Trojan's weapon, like a stake  
Hardened by fire, stood fixed within the shield, 710  
Part lay on earth, and he who cast it slunk  
Among his comrades to avoid his fate.  
Meriones, pursuing with his spear,  
Smote him between the navel and the groin,  
Where deadliest are the wounds in battle given 715  
To man's unhappy race. He planted there  
The cruel blade, and Adamas, who fell,  
Writhed panting round it, as a bullock bound  
By cowherds on the mountain with strong cords  
Pants as they lead him off against his will. 720  
So wounded, Adamas drew heavy breath,  
And yet not long. The brave Meriones,  
Approaching, plucked the weapon forth, and night  
Came o'er the eyes of Adamas. At hand  
Stood Helenus, and struck Deipyrus 725  
Upon the temple with his ponderous sword,  
Of Thracian make, and cut the three-coned helm  
Away, and dashed it to the ground ; it rolled  
Between a Grecian warrior's feet, who stooped  
And took it up, while o'er its owner's eyes 730  
The darkness gathered. Grieved at this, the son  
Of Atreus, Menelaus great in war,  
Rushed forward, threatening royal Helenus.

He brandished his sharp spear ; the Trojan drew  
His bow ; advancing, one to hurl a lance, 735  
And one to send an arrow. Priam's son  
Let fly a shaft at Menelaus' breast.

The bitter missile from the hollow mail  
Glanced off. As when from the broad winnowing-fan  
On some wide threshing-floor the swarthy beans, 740  
Or vetches, bound before the whistling wind  
And winnower's force, so, bounding from the mail  
Of gallant Menelaus, flew afar

The bitter shaft. Then Menelaus, great  
In battle, smote the hand of Helenus 745  
That held the polished bow ; the brazen spear  
Passed through the hand, and reached the bow, and  
there

Stood fixed, while Helenus, avoiding death,  
Drew back among his comrades, with his hand  
Held low, and trailing still the ashen stem. 750  
Magnanimous Agenor from the wound  
Drew forth the blade, and wrapped the hand in wool,  
Carefully twisted, taken from a sling  
Carried by an attendant of the chief.

To meet the glorious Menelaus sprang 755  
Pisander, led by his unhappy fate  
To perish, Menelaus ! by thy hand  
In that fierce conflict. When the two were near,  
Advancing toward each other, Atreus' son  
Took aim amiss ; his spear flew far aside. 760  
Pisander smote the buckler on the arm

Of mighty Menelaus, yet drave not  
The weapon through. The broad shield stopped its  
force,

And broke it at the neck ; yet hoped he still  
For victory, and exulted. Then the son 765

Of Atreus drew his silver-studded sword  
And sprang upon his foe, who from beneath  
His buckler took a brazen battle-axe,  
With a long stem of polished olive-wood.

Both struck at once. Pisander hewed away, 770  
Below the crest, the plumèd helmet-cone

Of Atreus' son, who smote, above the nose,  
Pisander's forehead, crashing through the bones.

Both bleeding eyes dropped to the ground amid  
The dust ; he fell ; he writhed ; the conqueror, 775

Advancing, set his heel upon his breast,  
And stripped the armor off, and, boasting, said :—

“Thus shall ye leave unharmed the fleet that  
brought

The knights of Greece, ye treaty-breaking sons  
Of Ilium, never satisfied with war ! 780

Yet lack ye not still other guilt and shame, —  
Wrong done to me, ye dogs ! Ye have not feared

The wrath of Hospitable Jove, who flings  
The thunder, and will yet destroy your town,

With all its towers, — ye who, without a cause, 785  
Bore off my youthful bride, and heaps of wealth,

When she had given you welcome as our guests.  
And now ye seek to burn with fire the fleet

With which we cross the ocean, and to slay  
 The Grecian heroes. Ye shall yet be forced, 790  
 Eager for battle as ye are, to pause.

O Father Jupiter, who hast the praise  
 Of highest wisdom among gods and men !  
 All this is of thy ordering. How hast thou  
 Favored this arrogant crew of Troy, in love 795  
 With violence, who never have enough  
 Of war and all its many miseries !  
 All other things soon satisfy desire, —  
 Sleep, love, and song, and graceful dance, which  
 . . . . . most

Delight in more than warlike toils, — yet they 800  
 Of Troy are never satisfied with war.”

So spake the illustrious man, and, having stripped  
 The bloody armor from the dead, he gave  
 The spoil to his companions, and rejoined  
 The warriors in the van. Harpalion then, 805  
 A son of King Pylæmenes, with whom  
 He left his home to join the war at Troy,  
 Assaulted him. He never saw again  
 His native land. Close to Atrides' shield,  
 He struck it in the centre with his lance, 810  
 Yet could not drive the weapon through the brass,  
 And backward shrank, in fear of death, among  
 His comrades, looking round him lest some foe  
 Should wound him with the spear. Meriones  
 Let fly a brazen arrow after him, 815  
 Which, entering his right flank below the bone,

Passed through and cleft the bladder. Down he sank  
Where the shaft struck him, breathing out his life  
In the arms of his companions. Like a worm  
He lay extended on the earth ; his blood 820  
Gushed forth, a purple stream, and steeped the soil.  
The large-souled Paphlagonians came around,  
And placed him in a chariot, sorrowing,  
And bore him to the gates of sacred Troy.  
The father followed weeping, but no hand 825  
Was raised to avenge the slaughter of his son.

Yet deeply moved was Paris at his death,  
For he had been Harpalion's guest among  
The Paphlagonians. Grieving for the slain,  
He sent a brazen arrow from his bow. 830  
Now there was one Euchenor, rich and brave,  
The son of Polyïdus, hoary seer ;  
His dwelling was in Corinth, and he came,  
Forewarned and conscious of his fate, to Troy ;  
For often Polyïdus, good old man, 835  
Warned him that he within his palace halls  
Should perish by a grievous malady,  
Or else be slain by Trojan hands beside  
The Grecian fleet. So, to escape at once  
The censure of the Achaians and disease, 840  
He came, lest he in after times might rue  
His choice. And now between the jaw and ear  
Did Paris smite him ; from the warrior's limbs  
Life fled, and darkness gathered o'er his eyes.

And then they fought ; like a devouring fire 845

That battle was ; but Hector, dear to Jove,  
Had not yet learned that on the left the Greeks  
Made havoc of his men ; for in that hour  
The Greeks had almost made the victory theirs,  
So greatly had the god who shakes the shores 850  
Kindled their courage, and with his own arm  
Brought timely aid. Still Hector, pressing on  
Where first he leaped within the gates and wall,  
Broke the close phalanxes of shielded Greeks.  
There, ranged beside the hoary deep, the ships 855  
Of Ajax and Protesilaus lay.  
The wall that guarded them was low, and there  
Warriors and steeds in fiercest conflict met ;  
There the Bæotians, there in their long robes  
The Iæonians, there the Locrians, there 860  
The men of Phthia, and the Epeians famed  
For valor, held back Hector, struggling on  
To reach the ships, yet found they had no power  
To drive the noble warrior from the ground,  
For he was like a flame. The chosen men 865  
Of Athens formed the van. Menestheus, son  
Of Peteus, was their leader, after whom  
Phidas and Stichius followed, and with them  
The gallant Bias. Meges, Phyleus' son,  
With Dracius and Amphion, marshalled there 870  
The Epeians ; while the Phthian band were led  
By Medon and Podarces, warlike chief.  
And Medon was the great Oileus' son,  
And brother of the lesser Ajax, born

Without the tie of wedlock, and he dwelt 875  
Far from his native land, in Phylacè ;  
For by his violent hand the brother died  
Of Eryopis, whom Oileus made  
His lawful spouse. Podarces was the son  
Of Iphiclus, and dwelt in Phylacè. 880  
These, at the head of Phthia's valiant youth,  
And cased in massive armor, fought beside  
Bœotia's warriors for the Grecian fleet.

But Ajax swift of foot, Oileus' son,  
From him of Telamon departed not 885  
Even for an instant. As when two black steers  
Of equal vigor o'er a fallow draw  
The strongly jointed plough, till near their horns  
Streams the warm sweat ; the polished yoke alone  
Holds them asunder, as they move along 890  
The furrow, and the share divides the soil  
That lies between them ; — so the heroic twain  
Kept near each other. Many men and brave  
Followed to Troy the son of Telamon  
As his companions, and, when weariness 895  
Came o'er his sweaty limbs, relieved their chief  
Of his broad buckler. But the Locrian host  
Attended not Oileus' great-souled son,  
Nor could they ever venture to engage  
In combat hand to hand. No brazen helms 900  
Were theirs, with horse-hair plumes, nor orbèd shields,  
Nor ashen spears. They came with him to Troy,  
Trusting in their good bows, and in their slings

Of twisted wool, from which they showered afar  
Stones that dispersed the phalanxes of Troy. 905  
The chieftains Ajax, warring in the van,  
Clad in their shining armor, fought to check  
The Trojans and their leader, brazen-mailed,  
While in the rear the Locrians lurked unseen,  
And sent their shafts, so that the men of Troy, 910  
All order lost, were fain to cease from fight.

Then had the Trojans from the ships and tents  
Turned back, and fled, with fearful loss of life,  
To lofty Ilium, if Polydamas  
Had not accosted valiant Hector thus : — 915

“Hector, thou hearkenest not to warning words.  
Deem'st thou, because a god has given thee strength  
Beyond all other men for feats of war,  
That therefore thou art wiser than they all  
In council? Think not for thyself to claim 920  
All gifts at once. On one the god bestows  
Prowess in war, upon another grace  
In dance, upon another skill to touch  
The harp and sing. In yet another, Jove  
The Thunderer implants the prudent mind, 925  
By which the many profit, and by which  
Communities are saved ; and well doth he  
Who hath it know its worth. Now let me speak  
What seems to me the wisest. Round thee flames  
The encircling war ; the valiant sons of Troy, 930  
Since they have crossed the ramparts, stand aloof,  
Armed as they are, or fight against large odds

Scattered among the galleys. Yield thou now  
 The ground, and, summoning the chiefs, decide  
 What plan to follow, — whether we shall storm 935  
 The well-oared galleys, should the God vouchsafe  
 The victory to us, — or else depart  
 In safety from the fleet. I greatly fear  
 The Achaians may repay to us the debt  
 Of yesterday. There yet is at the fleet 940  
 One who, I think, no longer will refrain  
 Wholly from battle.” Thus Polydamas  
 Spake, and the sage advice pleased Hector well,  
 Who, leaping from his chariot to the ground,  
 With all his weapons, said these wingèd words : —

“ Remain with all the bravest warriors here, 946  
 Polydamas, while I depart to give  
 The due commands, and instantly return.”

He spake, and with a shout he rushed away,  
 Seen from afar, like a snow-mountain’s peak, 950  
 And flew among the Trojans and allies,  
 Who crowded round the brave Polydamas,  
 The son of Panthöus, at Hector’s call.  
 Among the foremost combatants he sought  
 Deiphobus, and mighty Helenus, 955  
 The king ; he looked for Adamas, the son  
 Of Asius, and for Asius of the house  
 Of Hyrtacus. Some not unharmed he found,  
 Yet not o’ercome ; while others lay in death  
 Beneath the galley-sterns, where Grecian hands 960  
 Had slain them ; others on the wall, struck down

By missiles, or in combat hand to hand.  
 There on the left of that disastrous fray  
 He met the noble Alexander, spouse  
 Of fair-haired Helen, as he cheered his men, 965  
 And rallied them to battle. Hector thus  
 Addressed his brother with reproachful words :—

“ Accursed Paris ! noble but in form,  
 Effeminate seducer ! where are now  
 Deiphobus, and mighty Helenus ? 970  
 And Adamas, the son of Asius, where ?  
 And Asius, son of Hyrtacus ? and where  
 Orthryoneus ? Now towering Ilium sinks  
 From her high summit, and thy fate is sure.”  
 And then the godlike Paris answered thus :— 975

“ Since it hath pleased thee, Hector, thus to cast  
 Reproach on me, though innocent, I may  
 Another day neglect the toils of war;  
 Although in truth my mother brought me forth  
 Not quite unapt for combat. Since the hour 980  
 When thou didst lead the battle to the ships  
 With thy companions, we have held our ground,  
 Here on this spot, contending with the Greeks.  
 Three chiefs for whom thou askest have been slain.  
 Deiphobus and mighty Helenus, 985  
 Both wounded in the hand by massive spears,  
 Have left the field ; the son of Saturn saved  
 Their lives. Now lead us wheresoe’er thou wilt,  
 And we will follow thee with resolute hearts,  
 Nor deem that thou wilt find in us a lack 990

Of valor while our strength of arm remains.  
The boldest cannot fight beyond his strength."

With such persuasive words the warrior calmed  
His brother's anger, and they went where raged  
The hottest conflict round Cebriones, 995  
Phalces, Orthæus, and the excellent  
Polydamas, with Palmys at his side,  
And Polyphœtes, godlike in his form,  
And where Ascanius and Morys fought,  
Sons of Hippotion. They the day before 1000  
Came marching from Ascania's fertile fields,  
Moved by the will of Jove to share the war.  
All these swept on, as when a hurricane,  
A thunder-gust, from Father Jupiter  
Buffets the plain, and mingles with the deep, 1005  
In mighty uproar, and the billows rise  
All over the resounding brine, and swell,  
Whitening with foam, and chase each other on.  
So moved the Trojans on, man after man,  
In close array, all armed in glittering brass, 1010  
Following their generals. Hector, Priam's son,  
And peer of Mars in battle, led the van,  
His round shield held before him, tough with hides  
And overlaid with brass. Upon his brow  
The gleaming helmet nodded as he moved. 1015  
On every side he tried the phalanxes,  
If haply they might yield to his assault,  
Made from beneath that buckler ; but the Greeks  
In spirit or in order wavered not.

And Ajax, striding forth, defied him thus :— 1020

“ Draw nearer, friend ! Think’st thou to frighten  
thus

The Greeks ? We are not quite so inexpert  
In war, although so cruelly chastised  
By Jupiter. Thou thinkest in thy heart  
That thou shalt make our ships thy spoil ; but we 1025  
Have also our strong arms to drive thee back,  
And far more soon the populous town of Troy,  
Captured and sacked, shall fall by Grecian hands.  
And now I warn thee that the hour is near  
When, fleeing, thou shalt pray to Father Jove 1030  
And all the immortals, that thy long-maned steeds,  
Bearing thee townward mid a cloud of dust  
Along the plain, may be more swift than hawks.”

As thus he spake, an eagle, to the right,  
High in the middle heaven, flew over him, 1035  
And, gladdened by the omen, all the Greeks  
Shouted ; but then illustrious Hector spake : —

“ Babbler and boaster, what wild words are these ?  
O Ajax ! would that I were but as sure  
To be the child of ægis-bearing Jove, 1040  
Brought forth by Juno the august, and held  
In honor everywhere like that which crowns  
Apollo and Minerva, as I know  
That to the Greeks this very day will bring  
Destruction, and that thou shalt also lie 1045  
Slain with the others, if thou dare abide  
The stroke of my long spear, which yet shall tear

Thy dainty flesh, and thou, with thy full limbs,  
Shalt be the feast of Trojan dogs and birds,  
Unburied by the galleys of the Greeks.”

1050

So Hector spake, and led his warriors on.  
They followed with a mighty shout ; the rear  
Sent up as loud a cry. On the other side  
Shouted the Greeks, nor intermitted now  
Their wonted valor, but stood firm to breast  
The onset of the chosen men of Troy.  
The mingled clamor of both hosts went up  
To heaven, and to the shining seat of Jove.

1055

## BOOK XIV.

THE mighty uproar was not unperceived  
By Nestor's ear, who, sitting at the wine,  
Addressed the son of Æsculapius thus : —

“ Noble Machaon, what will happen now ?  
Bethink thee : for the clamor grows more loud 5  
From our young warriors at the ships. Stay here  
And drink the purple wine, while for thy limbs  
The fair-haired Hecamede warms the bath  
And washes the dark blood away, and I  
Will climb the watch-tower, and will know the worst.”

He spake, and took a buckler, fairly wrought, 11  
Glittering with brass, and left within the tent  
By Thrasymedes, his own knightly son,

Who to the war had borne his father's shield ;  
He grasped a ponderous spear, with brazen blade, 15  
And stood without the tent, and saw a sight  
Of shame, — the routed Greeks, and close behind  
The haughty Trojans putting them to flight,  
And the Greek wall o'erthrown. As when the face  
Of the great deep grows dark with weltering waves,  
That silently forbode the swift descent 21  
Of the shrill blast, the yet uncertain seas  
Roll not to either side, till from the seat  
Of Jupiter comes down the violent wind, —  
So paused the aged chief, uncertain yet 25  
Of purpose, — whether he should join the throng  
Of Greeks, with their swift coursers, or repair  
To sovereign Agamemnon, Atreus' son.  
This to his thought seemed wiser, and he went  
To seek Atrides. Meantime both the hosts 30  
Urged on the work of slaughter ; still they fought,  
And still the solid brass upon their limbs  
Rang, smitten with the swords and two-edged spears.

Then, coming from the fleet, the wounded kings,  
Nurslings of Jove, met Nestor ; toward him came 35  
Tydides, and Ulysses, and the son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon. On the beach  
Of the gray deep their ships were ranged afar  
From that fierce conflict. There the Greeks had  
drawn, 39  
To the plain's edge, the first that touched the land,  
And built a rampart at their sterns. Though long

The shore-line, it sufficed not to contain  
The galleys, and the host had scanty room ;  
Wherefore they drew the galleys up in rows,  
Row behind row, and filled the shore's wide mouth  
Between the promontories. There the kings 46  
Walked, leaning on their lances, to behold  
The tumult and the fight, and inly grieved.  
The sight of aged Nestor startled them,  
And thus the royal Agamemnon spake :— 50

“ Neleian Nestor, glory of the Greeks,  
Why hast thou left the murderous fray, and why  
Come hither? Much I fear the fiery chief,  
Hector, will make the menace good which once  
He uttered, speaking to the men of Troy, — 55  
Not to return to Ilium from the fleet  
Till he had burned our ships with fire, and slain  
Us also ; thus he spake, and now fulfils  
His menace. O ye gods ! the other Greeks,  
And not Achilles only, cherish hate 60  
Against me in their hearts, and now refuse  
To combat even where our galleys lie.”

And Nestor, the Gerenian knight, replied : —  
“ Thus is the threat accomplished, nor can Jove  
The Thunderer reverse the event. The wall 65  
In which we trusted as impregnable,  
Our fleet's defence and ours, is overthrown ;  
But obstinately still the Greeks maintain  
The combat at the ships, nor couldst thou now  
Distinguish with thy sharpest sight where most 70

The ranks are routed, so confusèdly  
They fall, and the wild uproar reaches heaven.  
Meantime consult we what may yet be done,  
If counsel aught avail ; yet can I not  
Advise to mingle in the strife again. 75  
It is not meet that wounded men should fight."

And then the royal Agamemnon said :—  
"Since at our ships, beneath their very sterns,  
The combat rages ; since the wall we built  
Avails not, nor the trench, at which the Greeks 80  
Labored and suffered, hoping it might be  
A sure defence for us and for our fleet,  
Certain it is that to Almighty Jove  
It hath seemed good that here the Greeks, afar  
From Argos, should be shamefully cut off ; 85  
For well was I aware when he designed  
To aid the Greeks, and well can I perceive  
That he is honoring now the men of Troy  
Like to the blessed gods, and fettering  
Our valor and our hands. Hear my advice, 90  
And follow it. Let us draw down the ships  
Nearest the sea, and launch them on the deep,  
And moor them, anchored, till the lonely night  
Shall come, when, if the 'Trojans pause from war,  
Haply we may draw down the other barks ; 95  
For he who flees from danger, even by night,  
Deserves no blame ; and better is his fate  
Who flees from harm than his whom harm o'ertakes."

Then wise Ulysses, with stern look, replied :—

“What words, Atrides, have escaped thy lips? 100  
Unhappy man, thou shouldst have held command  
O’er some effeminate army, and not ours, —  
Ours to whom Jupiter, from youth to age,  
Hath granted to accomplish difficult wars,  
Until we pass away. And wouldst thou then 105  
Depart from Troy, the city of broad streets,  
For which we have endured so much and long?  
Nay, be thou silent, lest the other Greeks  
Hear words that never should be said by one  
Who knows to speak with wisdom, and who bears 110  
The sceptre, and who rules so many Greeks  
As thou dost. I condemn with my whole soul  
The counsel thou hast given, commanding us,  
While yet the battle rages, to draw down  
Our good ships to the sea, that so the foe 115  
May see his wish more easily fulfilled,  
Even in the hour of triumph, and our fate  
Be certain ruin ; for the Greeks no more  
Will combat when they draw their galleys down,  
But, looking backward to the shore, will leave 120  
The battle there ; and thus, O king of men !  
Will mischief flow from what thou counselest.”

And Agamemnon, king of men, rejoined : —  
“Thou touchest me, Ulysses, to the heart  
With thy harsh censure ; yet I did not give 125  
Command to drag our good ships to the sea,  
Against the will of the Greeks. And would there  
were

Some other, young or old, to counsel them  
More prudently, for that would please me well."

Then spake the great in battle, Diomed : — 130

"The man is here, nor have ye far to look

If ye will be persuaded, and refrain

To blame me angrily, because my years

Are fewest midst you all. I too can boast

Of noble birth ; my father, Tydeus, lies 135

Buried beneath a mound of earth at Thebes.

To Portheus three illustrious sons were born,

Who dwelt in Pleuron, and in Calydon

The lofty, — Agrius, Melas, and the knight,

My father's father, Æneus, eminent 140

Among the rest for valor ; he remained

At home, but, wandering thence, my father went

To Argos, for the will of Jove was such, —

Jove and the other gods. He wedded there

A daughter of Adrastus, and he dwelt 145

Within a mansion filled with wealth ; broad fields

Fertile in corn were his, and many rows

Of trees and vines around him ; large his flocks,

And great his fame as one expert to wield,

Beyond all other Greeks, the spear in war. 150

This should ye know, for this is true ; nor yet

Contemn my counsel given with careful thought

And for your good, nor deem it comes from one

Unwarlike and low-born. Now let us join

The battle, wounded as we are, for much 155

It needs our presence, keeping carefully

Beyond the reach of weapons, to avoid  
Wound upon wound, and, cheering on the rest,  
Send back into the combat those who stand  
Apart, indulgent to their weariness." 160

He spake : they hearkened, and with hasty steps  
Went on, King Agamemnon at their head.

Nor was the glorious power that shakes the earth  
Unmindful of his charge. He went among  
The warriors in the semblance of a man 165  
Stricken in years, and, seizing the right hand  
Of Agamemnon, spake these wingèd words :—

“O son of Atreus, the revengeful heart  
Of Peleus' son must leap within his breast  
For joy, to see the slaughter and the rout 170  
Of the Achaians, since with him there dwells  
No touch of pity. May he perish too,  
Like us, and may some god o'erwhelm his name  
With infamy. With thee the blessed gods  
Are not so far incensed, and thou shalt see 175  
The Trojan chiefs and princes of their host  
Raising the dust-clouds on the spacious plain  
In fleeing from our ships and tents to Troy.”

He spake, and, shouting, strode across the field.  
As loud a cry as from nine thousand men, 180  
Or from ten thousand hurrying to engage  
In battle, such the cry that ocean's king  
Uttered from his deep lungs. It woke anew  
Invincible resolve in every heart  
Among the Greeks to combat to the end. 185

Now, Juno of the golden throne beheld  
As, standing on the Olympian height, she cast  
Downward her eyes to where her brother moved,  
Bearing his part with glory in the fray ;  
And inly she rejoiced. She also saw 190  
Jove on the peak of Ida, down whose side  
Glide many brooks, and greatly was displeased.  
Then the majestic goddess with large eyes  
Mused how to occupy the mind of him  
Who bears the ægis. This at length seemed best :  
To deck herself in fair array, and haste 196  
To Ida, that the God might haply yield  
To amorous desire, and in that hour  
Her hand might pour into his lids, and o'er  
His watchful mind, a soft and pleasant sleep. 200  
She went to her own chamber, which her son  
Vulcan had framed, with massive portals made  
Fast to the lintels by a secret bolt,  
Which none but she could draw. She entered in  
And closed the shining doors ; and first she took 205  
Ambrosial water, washing every stain  
From her fair limbs, and smoothed them with rich oil,  
Ambrosial, soft, and fragrant, which, when touched  
Within Jove's brazen halls, perfumed the air  
Of earth and heaven. When thus her shapely form  
Had been anointed, and her hands had combed 211  
Her tresses, she arranged the lustrous curls,  
Ambrosial, beautiful, that clustering hung  
Round her immortal brow And next she threw

Around her an ambrosial robe, the work 215  
Of Pallas, all its web embroidered o'er  
With forms of rare device. She fastened it  
Over the breast with clasps of gold, and then  
She passed about her waist a zone which bore  
Fringes an hundred-fold, and in her ears 220  
She hung her three-gemmed ear-rings, from whose  
gleam

She won an added grace. Around her head  
The glorious goddess drew a flowing veil,  
Just from the loom, and shining like the sun ;  
And, last, beneath her bright white feet she bound  
The shapely sandals. Gloriously arrayed 225  
In all her ornaments, she left her bower,  
And calling Venus to herself, apart  
From all the other gods, addressed her thus : —

“ Wilt thou, dear child, comply with what I ask ?  
Or, angered that I aid the Greeks, while thou 231  
Dost favor Troy, wilt thou deny my suit ? ”

And thus Jove's daughter, Venus, made reply : —  
“ O Juno, whom I reverence, speak thy thought,  
Daughter of mighty Saturn ! for my heart 235  
Commands me to obey thy wish in all  
That I can do, and all that can be done.”

And thus imperial Juno, planning guile,  
Rejoined : “ Give me the charm and the desire  
With which thou overcomest gods and men. 240  
I go to the far end of this green earth,  
To visit Ocean, father of the gods,

And Mother Tethys, who, receiving me  
 From Rhea, cherished me, and brought me up  
 In their abodes, when Jove the Thunderer 245  
 Cast Saturn down to lie beneath the earth  
 And barren sea. I go to visit them,  
 And end their hateful quarrel. For too long  
 Have they been strangers to the marriage-bed.  
 But if my words persuade them, and bring back 250  
 Their hearts to their old love, my name will be  
 Honored by them, and dear throughout all time."

And laughter-loving Venus answered thus : —  
 "What thou desirest should not be denied,  
 And shall not, for thou sleepest in the arms 255  
 Of Jupiter, the mightiest of the gods."

She spake, and from her bosom drew the zone,  
 Embroidered, many-colored, and instinct  
 With every winning charm — with love, desire,  
 Dalliance, and gentle speech — that stealthily 260  
 O'ercomes the purpose of the wisest mind,  
 And, placing it in Juno's hands, she said : —

"This many-colored zone, and all that dwells  
 Within it, take, and in thy bosom hide,  
 And thou, I deem, wilt not return and leave 265  
 Thy purpose unfulfilled." As thus she spake,  
 The large-eyed stately Juno smiled and took,  
 And, smiling, in her bosom placed the zone,  
 While Venus, daughter of the Thunderer,  
 Went to the palace. Juno took her way 270  
 From high Olympus o'er Pieria's realm

And rich Emathia, o'er equestrian Thrace,  
 With snowy peaks exceeding high ; her feet  
 Touched not the ground. From Athos suddenly  
 She stooped upon the tossing deep, and came 275  
 To Lemnos, seat of Thoas the divine,  
 And there she met Death's brother, Sleep, and took  
 His hand in hers, and thus accosted him :—

“ O Sleep, whose sway is over all the gods  
 And all mankind, if ever thou didst heed 280  
 My supplication, hearken to me now,  
 And I shall be forever grateful. Close  
 The glorious eyes of Jove beneath his lids  
 Midst our embracings, and for thy reward  
 Thou shalt possess a sumptuous throne of gold 285  
 Imperishable. Vulcan, my lame son,  
 Shall forge it for thee, and adorn its sides,  
 And place below a footstool, upon which  
 Thy shining feet shall rest in banqueting.”

Then gentle Sleep made answer, speaking thus :—  
 “ Great Saturn's daughter, Juno the august, 291  
 On any other of the deathless gods  
 Could I bring slumber, — even on the tides  
 Of the swift Ocean, parent of them all ;  
 Yet may I not approach Saturnian Jove 295  
 If he command me not. Already once  
 He made me quail with fright before his threats,  
 When his magnanimous son, Alcides, sailed  
 From Troy, which he had ravaged. Then I lulled  
 The senses of the Ægis-bearer, Jove, 300

Wrapping myself around him, while thy mind  
 Was planning mischiefs for his son, and thou  
 Didst wake the blasts of all the bitter winds  
 To sweep the ocean, and to bear away  
 The hero on its billows from his friends 305  
 To populous Cos. When Jupiter awoke  
 His anger rose ; he seized and flung the gods  
 Hither and thither ; me he chiefly sought,  
 And would have cast me to destruction, down  
 From the great heavens into the deep, if Night, 310  
 Whose power o'ercomes the might of gods and men,  
 Had not preserved me, fleeing to her shade.  
 So Jove refrained, indignant as he was,  
 For much he feared to offend the swift-paced Night.  
 And now thou bid'st me tempt my fate again." 315

Imperial, large-eyed Juno thus rejoined : —  
 " Why rise such thoughts, O Sleep, within thy heart ?  
 Deem'st thou that Jove the Thunderer favors Troy  
 As much as he was angered for the sake  
 Of Hercules, his son ? Do what I ask, 320  
 And thou shalt have from me a wedded spouse.  
 One of the younger Graces shall be thine, —  
 Pasithea, whom thou hast desired so long."

She spake, and Sleep, delighted, answered thus : —  
 " Swear now to me, O goddess, by the Styx, 325  
 The inviolable river. Lay one hand  
 Upon the food-producing earth, and place  
 The other on the glimmering sea, that all  
 The gods below, round Saturn, may attest

Thy promise, — that thou wilt bestow on me 330  
One of the younger Graces for my bride, —  
Pasithea, whom I have desired so long."

He spake, and white-armed Juno willingly  
Complied ; she took the oath, and called on all  
The gods who dwell in Tartarus below, 335  
And bear the name of Titans. When the oath  
Was taken, and the accustomed rites performed,  
From Lemnos and from Imbrus forth they went,  
Shrouded in mist ; and swiftly moving on  
Toward Ida, seamed with rivulets and nurse 340  
Of savage beasts, they came to Lectos first,  
And there they left the sea. Their way was now  
Over the land, and underneath their feet  
The forest summits shook. Sleep halted there  
Ere yet the eye of Jupiter descried 345  
His coming, and upon a lofty fir,  
The tallest growing on the Idæan mount,  
High in the air among the clouds of heaven,  
Springing from earth, he took his perch within  
The screen of branches, like the shrill-voiced bird,  
Called Chalcis by the immortals, and by men 350  
Cymindis, haunting the high mountain-side.

And Juno hastened on to Gargarus,  
The peak of lofty Ida. Jupiter,  
The Cloud-compeller, saw her, and at once 355  
Love took possession of his mighty heart,  
As when they first were wedded, and withdrew  
From their dear parents' sight. The God drew near

And stood before her, and addressed her thus : —

“ Why art thou hastening from Olympus thus, 360  
And whither ; yet without thy steeds and car ? ”

And Juno answered with dissembled guile : —

“ To the far ends of the green earth I go,  
To visit Ocean, father of the gods,  
And Mother Tethys, in whose palace halls 365  
They nourished me, and brought me up. I go  
To end their hateful quarrels, for too long  
Have they been strangers to the marriage-bed,  
Incensed against each other. Now my steeds,  
Waiting to bear me over land and sea, 370  
Stand at the foot of Ida seamed with rills,  
And now I come to thee, lest thou perchance  
Be wroth if I unknown to thee repair  
To where old Ocean dwells amid his deeps.”

The Cloud-compeller, Jupiter, rejoined : — 375

“ Hereafter, Juno, there will be a time  
For such a journey ; meantime let us give  
This hour to rest and dalliance. Never yet  
Did love of goddess or of mortal maid  
Possess and overcome my heart as now ; 380  
Not even when I loved Ixion's dame,  
Who bore Pirithoüs, prudent as a god  
Among the counsellors ; nor when I loved  
Acrisius' daughter with the dainty feet,  
Danaë, who brought forth Perseus, eminent 385  
Above the other warrior-chiefs ; nor when  
I carried off from Phœnix the renowned

His daughter, who bore Minos afterward,  
 And Rhadamanthus. Never so I loved  
 Semele, nor Alcmena who in Thebes 390  
 Brought forth to me the great-souled Hercules,  
 My valiant son, while Bacchus, the delight  
 Of men, was born of Semele ; nor yet  
 So loved I Ceres, fair-haired queen, nor yet  
 Latona, gloriously beautiful, 395  
 Nor even thee, as now I love, and yield  
 My spirit to the sweetness of desire."

Imperial Juno artfully replied : —  
 "Importunate Saturnius, what is this  
 That thou hast said ? If on this summit height 400  
 Of Ida we recline, where all around  
 Is open to the sight, how will it be  
 Should any of the ever-living gods  
 Behold us sleeping, and to all the rest  
 Declare it ? I could never, rising thence, 405  
 Enter again thy palace, save with shame.  
 Yet if thou truly speakest thy desire,  
 Thou hast a marriage-chamber of thine own,  
 Which Vulcan, thy beloved son, for thee  
 Framed, fitting to its posts the solid doors ; 410  
 And thither let us go to take our rest  
 Within it, since thou hast declared thy will."

Then spake again the Cloud-compeller Jove : —  
 "O Juno ! fear thou not that any god  
 Or man will look upon us. I shall throw 415  
 A golden cloud around us, which the Sun

Himself cannot look through, although his eye  
Is piercing, far beyond all other eyes."

The son of Saturn spake, and took his wife  
Into his arms, while underneath the pair 420  
The sacred Earth threw up her freshest herbs, —  
The dewy lotus, and the crocus-flower,  
And thick and soft the hyacinth. All these  
Upbore them from the ground. Upon this couch  
They lay, while o'er them a bright golden cloud 425  
Gathered, and shed its drops of glistening dew.

So slumbered on the heights of Gargarus  
The All-Father, overcome by sleep and love,  
And held his consort in his arms. Meanwhile  
The gentle Sleep made haste to seek the fleet 430  
Of Greece. He bore a message to the god  
Neptune, who shakes the shores, and, drawing near,  
He thus accosted him with wingèd words :—

"Now, Neptune, give the Greeks thy earnest aid,  
And though it be but for a little space, 435  
While Jupiter yet slumbers, let them win  
The glory of the day ; for I have wrapt  
His senses in a gentle lethargy,  
To which he is betrayed by Juno's wiles."

He spake, and took his way, departing thence 440  
Among the tribes of men. These words inflamed  
The god's desire to aid the Greeks ; he sprang  
Far on among the foremost, and exclaimed :—

"O Greeks ! do ye again submit to yield  
The victory to Hector, Priam's son. 445

That he may seize our fleet and bear away  
The glory of the day? This is his hope,  
And this his boast, since now Achilles lies  
Inactive at his ships, in sullen wrath.  
Yet little should we need him, if the rest 450  
Stood bravely by each other. Hear me now,  
And do what I advise. Let all of us,  
The best and bravest, bearing shields, and capped  
With glittering helms, and wielding in our hands  
The longest spears, advance, and I will lead 455  
The charge ; nor do I think that Hector, son  
Of Priam, daring as he seems, will yet  
Abide our onset. Whoso has the heart  
To make a stand with me, and yet who bears  
A narrow shield, let it be given to one 460  
Less warlike, and a broader shield be found."

He spake ; they hearkened and obeyed. The kings  
Tydides, and Ulysses, and the son  
Of Atreus, Agamemnon, though their wounds 464  
Still galled them, marshalled and reviewed the ranks,  
And changed their arms ; they made the braver wear  
The better armor, and the worse they gave  
To the less warlike. Now, when o'er their breasts  
The burnished mail was girded, they began 469  
Their march ; the great earth-shaker, Neptune, led  
The onset, grasping in his sinewy hand  
A sword of fearful length and flashing blade,  
Like lightning. No man dared encounter it  
In combat ; every arm was stayed by fear.

Right opposite, illustrious Hector ranged 475  
His Trojans. Dark-haired Neptune and the son  
Of Priam now engaged in desperate strife,  
One on the side of Troy, and one for Greece.  
The sea swelled upward toward the Grecian tents  
And fleet, while both the armies flung themselves 480  
Against each other with a loud uproar.  
Not with such noise the ocean-billows lash  
The mainland, when the violent north wind  
Tumbles them shoreward ; not with such a noise  
Roar the fierce flames within the mountain glen, 485  
When leaping upward to consume the trees ;  
And not so loudly howls the hurricane  
Among the lofty branches of the oaks  
When in its greatest fury, as now rose  
The din of battle from the hosts that rushed 490  
Against each other with terrific cries.

At Ajax glorious Hector cast his spear,  
As face to face they stood. It missed him not,  
But struck him where two belts upon his breast  
O'erlapped each other, — that which held the shield  
And that which bore the silver-studded sword. 496  
These saved the tender muscles. Hector, vexed  
That thus his weapon should have flown in vain,  
Retreated toward his comrades, shunning death.  
As he drew back, the Telamonian hurled 500  
A stone, — for stones in multitude, that propped  
The galleys, lay around, and rolled among  
The feet of those who struggled. One of these

He lifted, smiting Hector on the breast,  
Above the buckler's orb and near the neck. 505  
He sent it spinning like a top ; it fell  
And whirled along the ground. As when beneath  
The stroke of Father Jupiter an oak  
Falls broken at the root, and from it fumes  
A stifling smell of sulphur, and the heart 510  
Of him who stands and sees it sinks with dread, —  
For fearful is the bolt of mighty Jove, —  
So dropped the valiant Hector to the earth  
Amid the dust ; his hand let fall the spear ;  
His shield and helm fell with him, and his mail 515  
Of shining brass clashed round him. Then the  
Greeks

Rushed toward him, yelling fiercely, for they hoped  
To drag him thence ; and many a lance they cast ;  
But none by javelin or by thrust could wound  
The shepherd of the people, for there came 520  
Around him all the bravest of his host, —  
Polydamas, Æneas, and the great  
Agenor, and Sarpedon, he who led  
The Lycian bands, and Glaucus the renowned ;  
These flung themselves into the strife, while none 525  
Of all the rest refrained, but firmly held  
Their broad round shields before him. Then his  
friends

Lifted him in their arms, and bore him off,  
Out of the conflict, to his fiery steeds  
That waited for him in the battle's rear, 530

With charioteer and sumptuous car ; and these  
Bore him to Ilium, sorely suffering.

But when they now had reached the crossing-place  
Of Xanthus, full of eddies, pleasant stream,  
The progeny of ever-living Jove, 535  
They lifted out the hero from the car,  
And laid him on the ground, and on him poured  
Water, at which his breath and sight returned.  
He sat upon his knees, and from his throat  
Gave forth the purple blood, and then he fell 540  
Back to the ground, and darkness veiled his eyes,  
For still his senses felt the stunning blow.

The Greeks saw Hector leave the field, and  
pressed  
The foe more hotly, and bethought themselves  
Of their old valor. Then the swift of foot, 545  
Oïlean Ajax, darted to the van,  
And with his fir-tree spear smote Satnius, son  
Of Enops, whom a Naiad eminent  
For beauty among all the nymphs brought forth  
To Enops, when on Satnio's banks he kept 550  
His flocks. Oïleus' son, expert to wield  
The spear, drew near, and pierced him in the flank.  
Prostrate he fell, and suddenly the Greeks  
And Trojans gathered round in desperate fray.  
Polydamas, the mighty spearman, son 555  
Of Panthoüs, coming to avenge him, smote  
On the right shoulder Prothoënor, son  
Of Areïlochus. The pitiless spear

Passed through, and falling in the dust he grasped  
The earth with dying hands. Polydamas 560  
Shouted aloud, exulting over him :—

“ Not vainly, as I think, hath flown the spear  
From the strong hand of the magnanimous son  
Of Panthoüs. Some Achaian hath received  
The weapon in his side, to lean upon 565  
In going down to Pluto’s dim abode.”

He spake ; the Achaians chafed to hear his boast,  
And most the warlike son of Telamon ;  
For the slain Greek fell near him. Instantly,  
Just as the Trojan moved away, he hurled 570  
His shining lance. Polydamas, to escape  
The death-stroke, sprang aside. Archilochus,  
Antenor’s son, received the blow : the gods  
Had doomed him to be slain. It pierced the spine  
Where the head joins the neck, and severed there 575  
The tendons on each side. His head and mouth  
And nostrils struck the ground before his knees.

And thus to excellent Polydamas  
Did Ajax shout in turn : “ Bethink thee now,  
And tell me truly, was not this a man 580  
Worthy to die for Prothoënor’s sake ?  
No man of mean repute or meanly born  
He seems, but either brother to the knight  
Antenor, or his son ; for certainly  
His looks declare him of Antenor’s race.” 585

He spake ; but well he knew the slain. Meanwhile  
The Trojans heard and grieved. Then Acamas,

Stalking around his fallen brother, slew  
 Promachus, the Bœotian, with his spear,  
 While dragging off the dead man by the feet. 590

Then o'er the fallen warrior, Acamas  
 Boasted aloud : "O measureless in threats !  
 Bowmen of Argos ! not to us alone  
 Shall woe and mourning come ; ye also yet  
 Will perish. See your Promachus o'erthrown, 595  
 And by my spear, that so my brother's death  
 May not be unrequited. Every man  
 Should wish a brother left to avenge his fall."

He ended, and the Greeks were vexed to hear  
 His boast ; the brave Peneleus most of all 600  
 Was angered, and he rushed on Acamas,  
 Who waited not the onset of the king,  
 And in his stead was Ilioneus slain,  
 The son of Phorbas, who was rich in flocks,  
 Whom Mercury, of all the sons of Troy, 605  
 Loved most, and gave him ample wealth ; his wife  
 Brought Ilioneus forth, and only him ;  
 And him Peneleus smote beneath the brow  
 In the eye's socket, forcing out the ball ; 609  
 The spear passed through, and reappeared behind.  
 Down sat the wounded man with arms outstretched,  
 While, drawing his sharp sword, Peneleus smote  
 The middle of his neck, and lopped away  
 The helmèd head, which fell upon the ground,  
 The spear still in the eye. He lifted it 615  
 As one would lift a poppy up, and thus

He shouted, boasting, to the Trojan host :—

“Go now, ye Trojans, and inform from me  
The father and the mother of the slain  
That they may mourn within their palace walls 620  
Illustrious Ilioneus. After this  
Shall the sad wife of Promachus, the son  
Of Alegenor, never hasten forth  
To meet her husband with glad looks, when we  
The Greeks return from Ilium with our fleet.” 625

He spake ; the Trojans all grew pale with fear,  
And gazed around for an escape from death.

Say, Muses, ye who on the Olympian height  
Inhabit, who was first among the Greeks  
To gather bloody spoil, when now the power 630  
That shakes the shores had turned the tide of war.

First, Ajax, son of Telamon, struck down  
Hyrtius, the leader of the Mysian band,  
And son of Gyrtias, while Antilochus  
Spoiled Mermerus and Phalces. Morys next, 635  
Slain by the weapon of Meriones,  
Fell with Hippotion. Teucer overthrew  
Prothoüs and Periphoetes. Atreus' son  
Smote Hyperenor, prince among his tribe,  
Upon the flank ; the trenchant weapon drank 640  
The entrails, and the soul, driven forth, escaped  
Through the deep wound, and darkness veiled his  
eyes.

But Ajax swift of foot, Oïleus' son,  
O'erthrew the most, for none could equal him  
In swift pursuit when Jove ordained a flight. 645

## BOOK XV.

NOW when the Trojans in their flight had crossed  
 Rampart and trench, and many had been slain  
 By the pursuing Greeks, they made a halt  
 Beside their chariots, in despair and pale  
 With terror. Meanwhile Jupiter awoke, 5  
 On Ida's height, from slumber by the side  
 Of Juno, goddess of the golden throne.  
 At once he rose and saw the Trojan host  
 Routed, and, following close upon their flight,  
 The Argive warriors putting them to rout, 10  
 Aided by Neptune, sovereign of the sea,  
 And Hector lying on the field among  
 His fellow-warriors, breathing painfully,  
 Vomiting blood, and senseless, for the arm  
 That smote was not the feeblest of the Greeks. 15  
 The Father of immortals and of men  
 Beheld and pitied him, and terribly  
 Frowned upon Juno, and bespake her thus : —  
 “O evil-minded Juno, full of guile !  
 Thy arts have made the noble Hector leave 20  
 The combat, and have forced his troops to flee.  
 I know not whether 't were not well that thou  
 Shouldst taste the fruit of thy pernicious wiles,  
 Chastised by me with stripes. Dost thou forget  
 When thou didst swing suspended, and I tied 25  
 Two anvils to thy feet, and bound a chain

Of gold that none could break around thy wrists ?  
 Then didst thou hang in air amid the clouds,  
 And all the gods of high Olympus saw  
 With pity. They stood near, but none of them 30  
 Were able to release thee. Whoso came  
 Within my reach I seized, and hurled him o'er  
 Heaven's threshold, and he fell upon the earth  
 Scarce breathing. Yet the passion of my wrath,  
 Caused by the wrongs of godlike Hercules, 35  
 Was not to be so calmed ; for craftily  
 Hadst thou called up the violent northern blast,  
 To chase him far across the barren deep,  
 And drive him from his course to populous Cos.  
 I rescued him at length, and brought him back 40  
 To Argos famed for steeds, though after long  
 And many hardships. I remind thee now  
 Of this, that thou mayst see of what avail  
 Hereafter thy dissembled love and all  
 Thy cunning strategies will be to thee." 45

He spake, and Juno, large-eyed and august,  
 Shuddered, and answered Jove with wingèd  
 words : —

“ Be witness, Earth, and the great Heavens above,  
 And waters of the Styx that glide beneath, —  
 That dreadful oath which most the blessed gods 50  
 Revere, — be witness, too, that sacred head  
 Of thine, and our own nuptial couch, by which  
 I would not rashly swear at any time,  
 That not by my persuasion Neptune went —

The shaker of the shores — to harass Troy 55  
And Hector, and to aid the cause of Greece.  
He went self-counselled ; he had seen the Greeks  
Pressed grievously beside their fleet, and took  
Compassion on them. Yet would I advise  
That he obey thy word, and take his place 60  
Where thou, the Cloud-compeller, bid'st him go."

She ended, and the Father of the gods  
And mortals smiled, and said, in wingèd words :—

" Large-eyed, imperial Juno, wouldst thou sit  
In council with the immortals, and assist 65  
My purposes, then Neptune, though at heart  
He were averse, would yet conform his will  
To mine and thine. If thou dost truly speak,  
And from thy heart, go now to where the gods  
Assemble, summon Iris, and with her 70  
The archer-god Apollo. Give in charge  
To Iris that she hasten to the host  
Of the mailed Greeks, and bid king Neptune leave,  
The battle for his palace. Let the god  
Phœbus, preparing Hector for the fight, 75  
Breathe strength into his frame, that so he lose  
The sense of pain which bows his spirit now,  
And he shall force the Greeks again to flee  
In craven fear. Then shall their flying host  
Fall back upon the galleys of the son 80  
Of Peleus, who shall send into the fight  
His friend Patroclus. Him the mighty spear  
Of Hector shall o'erthrow before the walls

Of Ilium, after many a Trojan youth  
Shall by his hand have fallen, and with them 85  
My noble son, Sarpedon. Roused to rage,  
Then shall the great Achilles take the life  
Of Hector. Be it from this time my care  
That all the assaults of Trojans in the fleet  
Be beaten back, till by Minerva's aid 90  
The Greeks possess the lofty town of Troy.  
Still am I angry, nor will I allow  
One of the ever-living gods to aid  
The Greeks, until the prayer of Peleus' son  
Shall fully be accomplished, as my word 95  
And nod were given, when Thetis clasped my knees,  
Entreating me to honor, signally,  
Her son, Achilles, spoiler of walled towns."

He spake ; the white-armed goddess willingly  
Obeyed him, and from Ida's summit flew 100  
To high Olympus. As the thought of man  
Flies rapidly, when, having travelled far,  
He thinks, "Here would I be, I would be there,"  
And flits from place to place, so swiftly flew  
Imperial Juno to the Olympian mount, 105  
And there she found the ever-living gods  
Assembled in the halls of Jupiter.  
These, as they saw her, starting from their seats,  
Reached forth their cups to greet her. All the rest  
She overlooked, and took the beaker held 110  
By blooming Themis, who in haste had run  
To meet her, and in wingèd accents said : —

“Why comest thou, O Juno ! with the look  
Of one o’ercome with fear. Hath Saturn’s son,  
Thy lord, disquieted thy soul with threats?” 115

The white-armed goddess Juno answered her : —  
“Ask me not, heavenly Themis, — thou dost know  
The cruel, arrogant temper that is his, —  
But sit presiding at the common feast,  
In this fair palace of the gods, and thou 120  
And all in heaven shall hear what evils Jove  
Has threatened. All, I think, will not rejoice  
To hear the tidings, be they gods or men,  
Though some contentedly are feasting now.”

Thus having said, imperial Juno took 125  
Her place, and all the gods within the halls  
Of Jupiter were grieved. The goddess smiled,  
But only with the lips ; her forehead wore  
Above the jetty brows no sign of joy,  
While thus she spake in anger to the rest : — 130

“Vainly, and in our madness, do we strive  
With Father Jove. We come and seek by craft  
Or force to move his stubborn will ; he sits  
Apart, unyielding, unregarding, proud  
Of the vast strength and power in which he stands  
Above all other of the deathless gods. 136  
Bear therefore patiently whatever ill  
He sends to each. Already, as I learn,  
Hath Mars his share of sorrow. In the war  
Ascalaphus hath perished, whom he loved 140  
Dearly, beyond all other men, and whom

The fiery god acknowledged as his son."

As thus she spake, Mars smote his sinewy thighs  
With his dropped hands, and sorrowfully said :—

“ Be not offended with me, ye who make 145  
Your dwelling on Olympus, if I go  
Down to the Achaian fleet, and there avenge  
The slaughter of my son, though I be doomed  
To fall before the thunderbolt of Jove,  
And lie in blood and dust among the dead.” 150

He spake, and summoned Fear and Flight to yoke  
His steeds, and put his glorious armor on.  
Then greater and more terrible had been  
The avenging wrath of Jupiter inflamed  
Against the gods, if Pallas in her fear 155  
For all the heavenly dwellers had not left  
Her throne, and, rushing through the portals,  
snatched

The helmet from his head, and from his arm  
The shield, and from his brawny hand the spear,  
And laid the brazen weapon by, and thus 160  
Rebuked the fiery temper of the god :—

“ Thou madman, thou art frantic, thou art lost !  
Hast thou not ears to hear, nor any shame  
Nor reason left ? Hast thou not heard the words  
Of white-armed Juno, who so lately left 165  
Olympian Jupiter ? Wouldst thou return  
In pain and sorrow to the Olympian heights,  
Driven back ingloriously, and made the cause  
Of many miseries to all the gods ? —

For Jove would leave the Trojans and their foes, 170  
 The gallant Greeks, and turn on us, and bring  
 Ruin upon Olympus. He would seize  
 Guilty and guiltless in his rage alike.  
 Wherefore I counsel thee to lay aside  
 Resentment for the slaughter of thy son, 175  
 Since braver men and stronger have been slain,  
 And will be slain hereafter. Vain it were  
 To seek from death to save the race of man."

She said, and, leading back the fiery Mars,  
 Seated him on his throne, while Juno called 180  
 Apollo forth, with Iris, messenger  
 Of heaven, and thus in wingèd accents spake : —

"Jove calls you both to Ida. When ye reach  
 Its heights, and look upon his countenance,  
 Receive his sovereign mandate and obey." 185

So spake imperial Juno, and withdrew  
 And took her seat again, while they in haste  
 Flew toward the mount of Ida, seamed with rills  
 And nurse of savage beasts. Upon the top  
 Of Gargarus they found the Thunderer, 190  
 The son of Saturn, sitting. In a cloud  
 Of fragrant haze he sat concealed ; the twain  
 Entered and stood before the God of Storms,  
 Who saw them not displeased, so speedily  
 Had they obeyed his consort. First he turned 195  
 To Iris, and in wingèd accents said : —

"Haste thee, swift Iris, and report my words  
 To royal Neptune, and report them right.

Bid him, withdrawing from the battle-field,  
Repair to the assembly of the gods, 200  
Or the great ocean. If he disobey,  
Contemning my command, then bid him think  
Maturely, whether, mighty though he be,  
He can withstand when I put forth my power  
Against him. Greater is my strength than his, 205  
And elder-born am I. Yet in his pride  
Of heart he dares to call himself my peer,  
Though all the others look on me with awe."

Thus spake the god, and Iris, whose swift feet  
Are like the wind, obeyed, and downward plunged  
From Ida's height to sacred Troy. As when 211  
Snow-flakes or icy hail are dropped to earth  
From clouds before the north wind when it sweeps  
The sky, so darted Iris to the ground,  
And stood by mighty Neptune's side, and said : —

"O dark-haired shaker of the shores, I bring 216  
A message from the Ægis-bearer, Jove,  
That thou, withdrawing from the battle-field,  
Repair to the assembly of the gods,  
Or the great ocean. If thou disobey, 220  
Contemning his command, then hear his threat :  
He will come hither and put forth his power  
Against thee, and he warns thee not to tempt  
The strife ; for greater is his power than thine,  
And he is elder-born, though in thy pride 225  
Of heart thou dost declare thyself the peer  
Of him whom all the rest regard with awe."

Illustrious Neptune answered with disdain : —  
 “ In truth an arrogant speech ; he seeks by force  
 To bar me from my purpose, who can claim 230  
 Rights equal to his own, though great his power.  
 We are three brothers, — Rhea brought us forth, —  
 The sons of Saturn, — Jupiter, and I,  
 And Pluto, regent of the realm below.  
 Three parts were made of all existing things, 235  
 And each of us received his heritage.  
 The lots were shaken ; and to me it fell  
 To dwell forever in the hoary deep,  
 And Pluto took the gloomy realm of night,  
 And, lastly, Jupiter the ample heaven 240  
 And air and clouds. Yet doth the earth remain,  
 With high Olympus, common to us all.  
 Therefore I yield me not to do his will,  
 Great as he is ; and let him be content  
 With his third part. He cannot frighten me 245  
 With gestures of his arm. Let him insult  
 With menaces the daughters and the sons  
 Of his own loves, and give them law, since they  
 Perforce must hear, and patiently submit.”

Then the fleet-footed Iris spake again : — 250  
 “ O dark-haired Neptune, shall I bear from thee  
 This harsh, defiant answer back to Jove,  
 Or shall it yet be changed ? The prudent mind  
 Yields to the occasion, and thou knowest well  
 The Furies wait upon the elder-born.” 255

Then spake in turn the god who shakes the  
 shores : —

“O goddess Iris, thou hast wisely said.  
An excellent thing it is when messengers  
Know how to counsel well. But in my heart  
And soul a wrathful sense of injury 260  
Arises when he chides with insolent words  
Me, who was equal with him in my lot,  
And born to equal destinies. Yet now,  
Although offended, I give way ; but this  
I tell thee, and ’t is from my heart, — if he, 265  
In spite of me and Pallas, spoiler-queen,  
And Juno, Mercury, and Vulcan, spare  
The towers of Troy, — if he refuse to bring  
Ruin on her, and glory on the Greeks,  
Then let him know that hatred without end 270  
Or intermission is between us two.”

As thus he spake, the shaker of the shores  
Quitted the Grecian army, took his way  
Seaward, and plunged into the deep. The host  
Perceived their loss. Then Cloud-compelling Jove  
Turned to Apollo and addressed him thus : — 276

“Now go at once to Hector, mailed in brass,  
Belovèd Phœbus, for the god who shakes  
The earth, departing to the ocean-deeps,  
Avoids our wrath ; else had the other gods, 280  
Even they who far beneath the earth surround  
Old Saturn, heard our quarrel. Well it is  
For both of us that he, although enraged,  
Braved not my arm, for otherwise the strife  
Had not been ended without sweat. Now take 285

The fringed ægis in thy hands, and shake  
 Its orb before the warrior Greeks, to fill  
 Their hearts with fear. I give, O archer-god,  
 Illustrious Hector to thy charge. Revive  
 The might that dwelt within him, till the Greeks 290  
 Reach, in their flight, the fleet and Hellespont ;  
 Then shall it be my care, by word and deed,  
 To give them rest and respite from their toils."

He spake : Apollo hearkened and obeyed  
 His father, darting down from Ida's height 295  
 Like the fleet falcon, chaser of the dove,  
 And swiftest of the race of birds. He found  
 Hector, the warlike Priam's noble son,  
 No longer on his bed. He sat upright ;  
 The life was coming back ; he knew again 300  
 His friends ; the heavy breathing ceased ; the sweat  
 Was stanchèd ; the will of ægis-bearing Jove  
 Revived the warrior's strength. The archer-god,  
 Phœbus, approached, and, standing by him, said : —

"Why, Hector, son of Priam, dost thou sit 305  
 Languishing thus, apart from all the host ?  
 Has aught of evil overtaken thee ?"

And then the crested Hector feebly said :  
 "Who mayst thou be, O kindest of the gods,  
 That thus dost question me ? Hast thou not heard  
 That the great warrior Ajax, with a stone, 311  
 Smote me upon the breast, and made me leave  
 The battle-field, where I o'ertook and slew  
 His comrades by the galleys of the Greeks ?

I thought to be this day among the dead 315  
In Pluto's mansion ; even now it seemed  
That I was breathing my dear life away."

Then spake again Apollo, archer-god : —  
"Take courage, for the son of Saturn sends 320  
From Ida's summit one who will attend  
And aid thee, — Phœbus of the golden sword,  
Long practised to defend thy Troy and thee.  
Rise now, encouraging thy numerous host  
Of charioteers to press with their swift steeds  
Straight toward the roomy galleys of the Greeks. 325  
I go before to smooth for them the way,  
And turn the Achaian bands, and make them flee."

He spake, and into the great ruler's breast  
Breathed strength and courage. As a stabled horse,  
Fed at his crib with barley, breaks the thong 330  
That fastened him, and, issuing, scours the plain  
Where he was wont in some smooth-flowing stream  
To bathe his sides, — he holds his head aloft  
Proudly, and o'er his shoulders streams the mane, —  
Consciously beautiful, he darts away 335  
On nimble knees, that bear him to the fields  
He knows so well, and pastures of the mares ; —  
So after he had hearkened to the god  
Moved the swift feet of Hector, and he flew  
To cheer his horsemen on. As peasant men 340  
Rush with their dogs in chase of hornèd stag  
Or mountain goat, whose refuge is among  
Thickets and lofty rocks, nor can they take

Their prey, for at their clamor there appears  
 A manèd lion in the way, and turns 345  
 The chasers back, although in hot pursuit, —  
 Thus did the Greeks embattled close pursue  
 The men of Ilium, striking with their swords  
 And two-edged spears ; but when at length they saw  
 Hector among the ranks of armèd men, 350  
 Their hearts were troubled, and their courage sank.

Thoas, Andræmon's son, the bravest far  
 Among the Ætolians, skilled to cast the spear  
 And combat hand to hand, addressed the Greeks.  
 In council few excelled him, when the youths 355  
 Assembled for debate. With prudent speech  
 Thoas bespake his fellow-warriors thus : —  
 “ Gods ! what a marvel do mine eyes behold ;  
 Hector has risen from death ! We fully thought,  
 Each one of us, that, smitten by the hand 360  
 Of Telamonian Ajax, he had died.  
 Some god hath rescued and restored to strength  
 This Hector who hath slain, and yet will slay,  
 I fear, so many Greeks. He comes not thus  
 Leading the charge without the aid of Jove, 365  
 The God of Thunders. Now let all of us  
 Follow this counsel : bid the multitude  
 Retreat upon the ships, and let the rest,  
 Who boast ourselves the bravest of the host,  
 Stand firm and breast his onset, and so break 370  
 Its fury with our lifted spears. I think,  
 With all his rage, he will be slow to fling

Himself into a band of armed Greeks."

He spake ; they hearkened and at once complied ;  
The Ajaxes, the Prince Idomeneus, 375  
Teucer, Meriones, and Meges, peer  
Of Mars, assembled all the chiefs, and ranked  
Their files to encounter Hector and his band  
Of Trojans, while the multitude fell back  
To the Greek galleys. Then, in close array, 380  
The Trojan host moved forward. Hector led  
The van in rapid march. Before him walked  
Phœbus, the terrible ægis in his hands  
Dazzlingly bright within its shaggy fringe,  
By Vulcan forged, the great artificer, 385  
And given to Jupiter, with which to rout  
Armies of men. With this in hand he led  
The assailants on. The Achaians kept their ground  
In serried ranks, and a sharp yell arose 389  
From Greeks and Trojans. Arrows from the string  
Flew through the air, and spears from valiant hands.  
Some pierced the breasts of warrior-youths, but more  
Fell half-way ere they reached their aim, and plunged  
Into the ground, still hungering for their prey.  
As long as Phœbus held the ægis still, 395  
The weapons reached and wounded equally  
Both armies, and in both the people fell ;  
But ever when the god looked face to face  
On the Greek knights, and shook the orb, and gave  
A mighty shout, he made their hearts to sink 400  
Within their bosoms, and their courage fled.

As when two beasts of prey at dead of night  
 Suddenly, while their keeper is away,  
 Scatter a herd of beeves or flock of sheep,  
 So the disheartened Greeks were put to rout, 405  
 For Phœbus sent among them fear, and gave  
 Victory to Hector and the men of Troy.

Then, as the lines were broken, man slew man.  
 First Stichius fell by Hector's hand, and next  
 Arcesilaus ; one was chief among 410  
 The mailed Bœotians, one the trusty friend  
 Of brave Menestheus. Medon fell before  
 Æneas, and with him Iasus died.  
 Medon was great Oïleus' base-born son,  
 And Ajax was his brother, and he dwelt 415  
 In Phylacè, an exile, for his hand  
 Had slain the brother of his father's wife,  
 The step-dame Eriopis, late espoused.  
 Iasus was appointed to command  
 The warriors sent from Athens, and he claimed 420  
 His birth from Sphelus, son of Bucolus.  
 Mecistes fell before Polydamas.  
 Polites struck down Echius in the van,  
 And Clonius died by great Agenor's hand ;  
 And Paris, when Deïochus had turned 425  
 To flee, among the foremost combatants,  
 Smote him upon the shoulder from behind,  
 And drave the brazen weapon through his heart.

Then, while the Trojans stripped the dead, the  
 Greeks

Fled every way, and, falling as they ran 430  
Into the trench and on the stakes, were driven  
Back o'er the rampart. Hector lifted up  
His mighty voice, and bade the Trojans leave  
The bloody spoil and hasten to the ships.

“And whomsoever I shall find apart 435  
In any place, at distance from the ships,  
There will I slay him. None of all his kin,  
Women or men, shall build his funeral pile,  
But dogs shall tear his limbs in sight of Troy.”

He spake; and on the shoulders of his steeds 440  
He laid the lash, and urged them toward the foe,  
And cheered the Trojans on. They joined their  
shouts

To his, and charged with all their steeds and cars;  
And fearful was the din. Apollo marched  
Before them, treading down with mighty feet 445  
The banks of the deep ditch, and casting them  
Back to the middle, till a causey rose,  
Broad, and of length like that to which a spear  
Reaches when thrown by one who tries his strength.  
O'er this the Trojans poured into the camp 450  
By squadrons, with Apollo still in front,  
Holding the marvellous ægis. He with ease  
O'erthrew the rampart. As a boy at play  
Among the sea-shore sands in childish sport  
Scatters with feet and hands the little mounds 45  
He reared, thus didst thou cause the mighty work,  
O archer Phœbus, which the Greeks had reared

With so much toil, to crumble. Thou didst fill  
Their hearts with eager thoughts of flight, till,  
hemmed

Between the assailants and their ships, they stopped  
And bade each other stand, and raised their hands  
To all the gods, and offered vows aloud.

Gerenian Nestor, guardian of the Greeks,  
With arms extended toward the starry skies,  
Prayed earnestly : “ O Father Jove, if e'er  
In fruitful Argos there were burned to thee  
The thighs of fattened oxen or of sheep,  
By one who asked a safe return to Greece,  
And thou didst promise it, remember him,  
God of Olympus, and avert from us  
The day of evil. Suffer not the Greeks  
To perish, slaughtered by the sons of Troy.”

So spake he supplicating. Jupiter  
The All-disposer thundered as he heard  
The old man's prayer. The Trojans by that voice  
Of ægis-bearing Jove were moved to press 476  
The Greeks more resolutely, and were filled  
With fiercer valor. As a mighty wave  
On the great ocean, driven before a gale  
Such as rolls up the hugest billow, sweeps 480  
O'er the ship's side, so swept the Trojan host  
With dreadful tumult o'er the wall. They drave  
Their steeds into the camp, and there they fought  
Beside the galley-sterns, and hand to hand,  
With two-edged spears, — they from their cars, the  
Greeks 485

From their black ships on high with long-stemmed  
poles

Which lay upon the decks, prepared for fight  
At sea, and strongly joined to blades of brass.

Patroclus, while the Greeks and Trojans fought  
Around the wall, at distance from the fleet 490  
Sat with the brave Eurypylus in his tent,  
Amusing him with pleasant talk, and dressed  
His wound with balms that calmed the bitter pain.

But when he saw the Trojans bursting in  
Over the wall, and heard the din, and saw 495  
The Achaians put to rout, he gave a cry  
Of sudden grief, and with his open hands  
Smote both his thighs, and sorrowfully said : —

“ Eurypylus, I cannot stay with thee,  
Much as thou needest me, for desperate grows 500  
The struggle. Now let thine attendant take  
The charge of thee. I hasten to persuade  
Achilles to the field. Who knows but I,  
With Jove’s good help, may change his purpose yet ?  
For potent are the counsels of a friend.” 505

The hero spake, and instantly his feet  
Bore him away. Meanwhile the Achaian host  
Firmly withstood the onset of their foes.  
And yet, though greater was their multitude,  
They could not drive the Trojans from the fleet, 510  
Nor could the Trojans break, with all their power,  
The serried lines, and reach the tents and ships.  
As when a plumb-line, in the skilful hands

Of shipwright well instructed in his art  
By Pallas, squares the beam that builds a bark, 515  
So even was the fortune of the fray.

While some beside one galley waged the war,  
And others round another, Hector came  
To encounter Ajax the renowned, and both  
Fought for one ship. The Trojan could not drive  
The Greek away, and burn his ship with fire, 521  
Nor the Greek drive the Trojan, for a god  
Had brought him thither. Then did Ajax smite  
Caletor, son of Clytius, with his spear  
Upon the breast, as he was bringing fire 525  
To burn the ship ; he dropped the torch, and fell,  
With clashing armor. Hector, as he saw  
His kinsman lying slain amid the dust  
By the black galley, raised his voice, and thus  
Called to the Lycians and the men of Troy : — 530

“Hear, men of Troy and Lycia, and ye sons  
Of Dardanus, who combat hand to hand,  
Stand firm, and never yield this narrow ground.  
Rescue the son of Clytius, who has fallen  
Before the ships, nor let the Achaians make 535  
His arms their spoil.” The hero spake, and aimed  
His shining spear at Ajax, whom it missed,  
But smote Lycophron, Mastor’s son, who served  
Ajax, and dwelt with him, for he had left  
His native land, Cythera, having slain 540  
One of the gallant Cytherean race.  
Him Hector smote upon the head beneath

The ear with his keen weapon, as he stood  
Near Ajax ; from the galley's stern he fell  
Headlong upon the ground, with lifeless limbs. 545  
Then to his brother Teucer Ajax spake :—

“ Dear Teucer, see, our faithful friend is gone,  
The son of Mastor, from Cythera's isle,  
Whom we had learned to honor equally  
With our own parents in our palaces. 550  
He falls before the great-souled Hector's hand.  
Where, then, are now thy shafts that carry death,  
And where the bow that Phœbus gave to thee ? ”

He spake, and Teucer, hearkening, came in haste,  
With his bent bow, and quiver full of shafts, 555  
And, standing near him, sent his arrows forth  
Among the Trojan warriors. There he smote  
Clitus, Pisenor's eminent son, the friend  
Of the renowned Polydamas, who claimed  
His birth from Panthoüs. Clitus held the reins, 560  
Guiding the coursers of Polydamas  
Where most the crowded Grecian phalanxes  
Wavered and broke, that so he might support  
Hector and his companions. Soon he met,  
Brave as he was, disaster which no hand 565  
Had power to avert : the bitter arrow struck  
His neck behind, and from the chariot-seat  
He fell to earth ; the startled steeds sprang back ;  
The empty chariot rattled. This the king  
Polydamas perceived, and came to meet 570  
His steeds, and gave them to Astinoüs,

The son of Protiäon, charging him  
 To keep them ever near, and in his sight,  
 While he, returning, mingled with the throng  
 That struggled in the van. Then Teucer aimed 575  
 Another shaft at Hector mailed in brass,  
 Which, had it reached him fighting gallantly,  
 Had made him leave the battle, for his life  
 Had ended there. The act was not unseen  
 By All-disposing Jupiter, whose power 580  
 Protected Hector, and denied the Greek  
 The glory hoped for ; for he snapped in twain  
 The firmly twisted cord as Teucer drew  
 That perfect bow ; the brazen arrow flew  
 Aside ; the warrior's hands let fall the bow, 585  
 And, shuddering, he bespake his brother thus : —

“ Now woe is me ! some deity, no doubt,  
 Brings all our plans to nought. 'T is he whose touch  
 Strikes from my hand the bow, and snaps in twain  
 The cord just twisted, which I bound myself 590  
 This morning to the bow, that it might bear  
 The frequent arrow bounding toward the foe.”

He spake, and thus replied the man of might,  
 The Telamonian Ajax : “ Lay aside  
 Thy bow, my brother, and thy store of shafts, 595  
 Since, in displeasure with the Greeks, a god  
 Has made them useless. Haste to arm thy hand  
 With a long spear, and on thy shoulders lay  
 A buckler, and with these attack the foe,  
 And bid thy fellows stand. Let Trojans see 600

That, even though the day thus far be theirs,  
They cannot lay their hands on our good ships  
Without a mighty struggle. Let us all  
Be mindful of our fame for gallant deeds."

He spake, and Teucer went to place the bow 605  
Within the tents, and on his shoulders hung  
A fourfold shield, and placed on his grand brows  
A stately helmet with a horse-hair crest  
That nodded fearfully. He took in hand  
A ponderous spear with brazen blade, and sprang 610  
Forward with hasty steps, and stood beside  
His brother Ajax. Hector, when he saw  
That Teucer's shafts had failed him, called aloud  
Upon the men of Lycia and of Troy :—

"Ye men of Troy and Lycia, and ye sons 615  
Of Dardanus who combat hand to hand,  
Acquit yourselves like men, my friends, and prove  
Your fiery valor by these roomy ships ;  
For I have seen with mine own eyes the shafts  
Of their chief warrior rendered impotent 620  
By Jupiter. His hand is plainly seen  
Among the sons of men ; to some he gives  
Glory above the rest ; from some he takes  
The glory, and withdraws from their defence.  
He withers now the courage of the Greeks, 625  
And succors us. Press closely round the fleet,  
And combat. Whosoe'er among you all,  
Wounded or beaten down, shall meet his death,  
So let him die ; 't is no inglorious fate

To perish fighting in his country's cause ; 630  
And he shall leave his wife and children safe,  
His home and household store inviolate,  
If now the Greeks depart to their own land."

With words like these he filled their hearts anew  
With strength and courage. On the other side 635  
Ajax exhorted thus his warrior friends :—

" Shame on you, Greeks ! We perish here, unless  
We rescue with strong arms our host and fleet.  
Think ye that, should the crested Hector seize  
Our galleys, ye may reach your homes on foot ? 640  
Hear ye not Hector's voice, who, fiercely bent  
To burn our ships with fire, is cheering on  
His warriors ? To no dance he summons them,  
But to the battle. Nought is left for us,  
And other counsel there is none, save this : 645  
Close with the foe ; let every hand put forth  
Its strength ; far better 't were to die at once,  
Or make at once our safety sure, than thus  
To waste away, in lingering fight, beside  
Our ships, destroyed by weaker arms than ours." 650

So spake the chief, and all who heard received  
Courage and strength. Then Hector put to death  
Schedius, the son of Perimedes, prince  
Of the Phocæans. Ajax also slew  
Laodamas, Antenor's honored son, 655  
A chief of infantry. Polydamas  
Struck down Cyllenian Otus, who had come,  
The comrade of Phylides, at the head

Of the high-souled Epeians. Meges saw,  
And rushed upon Polydamas, who sprang 660  
Aside unharmed, for Phœbus suffered not  
The son of Panthoüs thus to be o'erthrown,  
Fighting among the foremost. But the spear  
Of Meges wounded Cræsmus in the breast ;  
He fell with clanging arms. The slayer stripped 665  
The corpse ; but Dolops, son of Lampus, skilled  
To wield the spear, leaped on him in the act.  
Lampus, the father, best of men, was son  
Of king Laomedon, and eminent  
For warlike prowess. Dolops struck the shield 670  
Of Meges in the midst ; the corselet stayed  
The blade with its close-jointed plates, and saved  
The warrior's life. That corselet Phyleus brought  
From Ephyrè, beside the Selleïs,  
Given by his host, Euphetes, king of men, 675  
For his defence in battle, and it now  
Preserved his son from death. Then Meges smote  
With his sharp spear the helm that Dolops wore,  
And from its summit struck the horse-hair crest,  
New-tinged with purple, and the cone entire 680  
Fell midst the dust. While Meges, standing firm,  
Fought thus, and hoped the victory, to his aid  
Came warlike Menelaus, unobserved,  
And, standing near, smote Dolops from behind,  
Beneath the shoulder, and drove through the spear  
Till it appeared beyond. The Trojan fell 686  
Upon his face, and both the Greeks rushed on

To wrench the brazen armor from his limbs,  
 When Hector saw his fall and called aloud  
 Upon the kindred of the slain. He first 690  
 Rebuked the valiant Melanippus, son  
 Of Hicetaon, who but lately fed  
 His slow-paced bees at Percotè, while yet  
 The enemy was far from Troy ; but when  
 The Achaians landed from their well-oared barks, 695  
 He came to Troy, and took an eminent place  
 Among the Trojans. Near to Priam's halls  
 He had his dwelling, honored equally  
 With Priam's sons. Him Hector thus rebuked :—

“ Why, Melanippus, are we loitering thus ? 700  
 Grievest thou not to see thy kinsman slain ?  
 And see'st thou not how eagerly the Greeks  
 Are spoiling Dolops of his arms ? Come on  
 With me. No time is this for distant fight,  
 But either we must rout the Greeks, or they 705  
 Will level to the ground the lofty towers  
 Of Ilium, and will slay its citizens.”

He spake, and led the way ; his godlike friend  
 Followed him, while the son of Telamon,  
 Ajax, exhorted thus the sons of Greece :— 710

“ Be men, my friends, and let a noble dread  
 Of shame possess your hearts, and jealously  
 Look to each other's honor in the heat  
 Of battle ; for to men who flee there comes  
 No glory, and that way no safety lies.” 715

He spake, and all were eager to drive back

The assaulting foe ; they heeded well his words,  
And drew around their barks a fence of mail,  
While Jove urged on the Trojans. Then it was  
That Menelaus, brave in battle, spake 720  
To rouse the courage of Antilochus : —

“Antilochus, there is no other Greek  
Younger than thou, or fleetier ; none so strong  
For combat. Would that, springing on the foe,  
Thou mightest strike some Trojan warrior down.” 725

So speaking, he drew back ; but he had roused  
The courage of his friend, who, springing forth  
From midst the foremost combatants, took aim,  
First looking keenly round, with his bright spear,  
From which the Trojans shrank as they beheld 730  
The hero cast it. Not in vain he threw  
The weapon, for it struck upon the breast  
Brave Melanippus, Hicetaon's son ;  
Beneath the pap it smote him as he came.  
He fell with ringing arms ; Antilochus 735  
Sprang toward him like a hound that springs to seize  
A wounded fawn, which, leaping from its lair,  
Is stretched disabled by the hunter's dart.  
So sprang the stout Antilochus on thee,  
O Melanippus ! — sprang to spoil thy limbs 740  
Of armor ; but the noble Hector saw,  
And, hastening through the thick of battle, came  
Against him. Mighty as he was in war,  
Yet ventured not Antilochus to wait  
His coming ; but as flees a savage beast, 745

Conscious of guilty deed, when, having slain  
Herdsman or hound, that kept the pastured kine,  
He steals away before a crowd of men,  
So fled the son of Nestor. On his rear  
The Trojans under Hector poured a storm 750  
Of weapons, and the din was terrible.

Yet when he reached the serried ranks of Greece  
He turned and stood. Meanwhile the Trojan host,  
Like ravening lions, fiercely rushed against  
The galleys, that the will of Jupiter 755  
Might be fulfilled ; for now he nerved their limbs  
With vigor ever new, while he denied  
Stout hearts and victory to the Greeks, and cheered  
Their foes with hope. His purpose was to give  
The victory to Hector, Priam's son, 760  
Till he should cast upon the beakèd ships  
The fierce, devouring fire, and bring to pass  
The end for which the cruel Thetis prayed.

Therefore did Jove the All-disposer wait  
Till from a burning galley he should see 765  
The flames arise. Then must the Trojan host, —  
Such was his will, — retreating from the fleet,  
Yield to the Greeks the glory of the day.  
For this he moved the already eager heart  
Of Hector, son of Priam, to attack 770  
The roomy ships. The hero was aroused  
To fury fierce as Mars when brandishing  
His spear, or as a desolating flame  
That rages on a mountain-side among

The thickets of a close-grown wood. His lips 775  
Were white with foam ; his eyes from underneath  
His frowning brows streamed fire ; and as he fought,  
Upon the hero's temples fearfully  
The helmet nodded. Jupiter himself  
Sent aid from his high seat, and heaped on him 780  
Honor and fame beyond the other chiefs, —  
And they were many, — for his term of life  
Was to be short. Minerva even now  
Was planning to bring on its closing day,  
Made fatal by the might of Peleus' son. 785  
And now he strove to break the Grecian ranks,  
Assaulting where he saw the thickest crowd  
And the best weapons ; yet in vain he strove  
With all his valor. Through the serried lines  
He could not break ; the Greeks in solid squares 790  
Resisted, like a rock that huge and high  
By the gray deep abides the buffetings  
Of the shrill winds and swollen waves that beat  
Against it. Firmly thus the Greeks withstood  
The Trojan host, and fled not. In a blaze 795  
Of armor, Hector, rushing toward their ranks,  
Fell on them like a mighty billow raised  
By the strong cloud-born winds, that flings itself  
On a swift ship, and whelms it in its spray,  
While fearfully among the cordage howls 800  
The blast ; the sailors tremble and are faint  
With fear, as men who deem their death-hour nigh.  
So the Greek warriors were dismayed at heart.

As when a hungry lion suddenly  
Springs on a herd of kine that crop the grass 805  
By hundreds in the broad moist meadow-grounds,  
Beneath the eye of one who never learned  
To guard his hornèd charge from beasts of prey,  
But ever walks before them or behind,  
While the grim spoiler bounds into the midst 810  
And makes a prey of one, and all the rest  
Are scattered in affright, so all the Greeks  
Were scattered by the will of heaven before  
Hector and Father Jove. Yet only one,  
Young Periphœtes of Mycenæ, fell, 815  
The son of Copreus. Once his father went  
An envoy from Eurystheus to the court  
Of mighty Hercules. The son excelled  
The father in all gifts of form and mind,  
In speed, in war, in council eminent 820  
Among the noblest of his land. His death  
Brought Hector new renown ; for as he turned,  
Stepping by chance upon his buckler's rim,  
That reached the ground, — the buckler which had  
been  
His fence against the enemy's darts, — he fell 825  
Backward, his helmet clashing fearfully  
Around his temples. Hector saw, and came  
In haste, and pierced his bosom with his spear,  
Among his fellow-warriors, who with grief  
Beheld, yet dared not aid him, such their awe 830  
Of noble Hector. Now the Greeks retired

Among that row of galleys which were first  
Drawn up the beach ; the foe poured after them,  
In hot pursuit ; again the Greeks fell back,  
Constrained, and left that foremost row behind, <sup>835</sup>  
And stood beside their tents in close array,  
And not dispersed throughout the camp, for shame  
And fear restrained them, and unceasingly  
With shouts they bade each other bravely stand.  
Chiefly Gerenian Nestor, wise to guide <sup>840</sup>  
The counsels of the Greeks, adjured them all,  
And in their parents' name, to keep their ground.

“ O friends, be men ; so act that none may feel  
Ashamed to meet the eyes of other men.  
Think each one of his children and his wife, <sup>845</sup>  
His home, his parents, living yet or dead.  
For them, the absent ones, I supplicate,  
And bid you rally here, and scorn to fly.”

He spake, and his brave words to every heart  
Carried new strength and courage. Pallas then <sup>850</sup>  
Lifted the heaven-sent cloud that veiled the fight,  
And all things in the clear full light were seen  
On either side, both where the galleys lay  
And where the warriors struggled. They beheld  
Hector the great in war, and all his host, <sup>855</sup>  
Both those who formed the rear and wielded not  
Their arms, and those who combated in front  
Beside the ships. And now it pleased no more  
The soul of valiant Ajax to remain  
In the thick squadrons with the other Greeks, <sup>860</sup>

But, striding on the galley-decks, he bore  
A sea-pike two and twenty cubits long,  
Huge, and beset with iron nails. As when  
One who is skilled to vault on running steeds  
Chooses four horses from a numerous herd, 865  
And on the highway to a populous town  
Drives them, while men and women in a crowd  
Behold his feats with wonder, as he leaps  
Boldly, without a fall, from steed to steed,  
And back again, and all the while they run, 870  
So on the lofty decks of those good ships  
From ship to ship flew Ajax, lifting up  
His mighty voice, — a shout that reached to  
heaven, —

And bade the Greeks defend their fleet and tents.  
Nor loitered Hector in those armèd throngs 875  
Of Troy, but as a tawny eagle swoops  
Upon a flock of birds that seek their food  
Along a river's border, — geese or cranes,  
Or long-necked swans, — so Hector in hot haste  
Sprang toward a galley with an azure prow, 880  
While mightily the power of Jove impelled  
The hero onward, and inflamed his train  
With courage. Fiercely then around the ships  
The struggle was renewed. Thou wouldst have said  
No toils of war could tire those resolute arms, 885  
So stubbornly they fought. In every mind  
The thought was this : the Greeks were in despair  
Of rescue, and believed their hour had come

To perish ; every Trojan hoped to give  
 The fleet to flames, and slay the sons of Greece. 890  
 With thoughts like these the hostile warriors closed.

Then Hector laid his hand upon the stern  
 Of a stanch galley, beautiful and swift,  
 In which Protesilaüs came to Troy, —  
 It never bore him back. Around its keel 895  
 The Trojans and the Greeks fought hand to hand,  
 And slew each other. For no more they sent  
 The arrow or the javelin from afar,  
 Waiting to see the wound it gave, but each  
 With equal fury pressed upon his foe 900  
 With halberd and with trenchant battle-axe,  
 Huge sword and two-edged spear. Upon the ground  
 Had fallen many a fair black-hilted sword  
 With solid handles, some from slain men's hands,  
 Some from lopped arms of warriors ; the dark earth  
 Ran red with blood. But Hector, having laid 906  
 His hand upon the galley's stern, held fast  
 To the carved point, and called upon his men : —

“ Bring fire, and press in throngs upon the foe ;  
 For now doth Jove vouchsafe to us a day 910  
 Worth all the past, — a day on which we make  
 The ships our prey. Against the will of Heaven  
 They landed on our coast, and brought on us  
 Disasters many, through the coward fears  
 Of our own elders, who denied my wish 915  
 To combat at the galleys, and held back  
 The people. But if then the Thunderer

Darkened our minds, his spirit moves us now  
In what we do, and we obey his will."

He spake ; and they with fiercer valor fell 920  
Upon the Greeks. Even Ajax could no more  
Withstand the charge, but, fearing to be slain,  
Amid a storm of darts withdrew a space,  
To where the seven-foot bench of rowers lay,  
And left the galley's stern. There, as he stood, 925  
He watched the assailants keenly, and beat back  
With thrusts of his long spear whoever brought  
The firebrand. With terrific shouts he called  
Upon the Greeks to combat manfully : —

" O friends, Achaian heroes, ministers 930  
Of Mars, be men, be mindful of your fame  
For valor. Do ye dream that in your rear  
Are succors waiting us, or firmer walls  
That may protect us yet? Nay, no fenced town 934  
Have we for refuge, flanked with towers from which  
Fresh troops may take our place. Between the sea  
And country of the well-armed Trojans lie  
Our tents ; our native land is far away ;  
And now our only hope of safety left  
Is in our weapons : there is no retreat." 940

He spake, and mightily with his sharp spear  
Thrust at whoever of the men of Troy  
At Hector's bidding came with fire to burn  
The galleys. On the blade of that long spear  
The hero took them as they came, and slew 945  
In close encounter twelve before the fleet.

## BOOK XVI.

SUCH was the struggle for that gallant bark.  
Meanwhile Patroclus stood beside his friend  
The shepherd of the people, Peleus' son,  
And shed hot tears, as when a fountain sheds  
Dark waters streaming down a precipice. 5  
The great Achilles, swift of foot, beheld  
And pitied him, and spake these wingèd words : —  
“ Why weepest thou, Patroclus, like a girl, —  
A little girl that by her mother's side  
Runs, importuning to be taken up, 10  
And plucks her by the robe, and stops her way,  
And looks at her, and cries, until at last  
She rests within her arms ? Thou art like her,  
Patroclus, with thy tears. Dost thou then bring  
Sad tidings to the Myrmidons or me ? 15  
Or hast thou news from Phthia ? It is said  
That still Menœtius, son of Actor, lives,  
And Peleus also, son of Æacus,  
Among the Myrmidons. Full bitterly  
Should we lament to hear that either died. 20  
Or mournest thou because the Achæians fall  
Through their own folly by the roomy ships ?  
Speak, and hide nothing, for I too would know.”

And thou, O knight Patroclus, with a sigh  
Deep-drawn, didst answer thus : “ Be not displeased,

Achilles, son of Peleus, bravest far 26  
Of all the Achaian army! for the Greeks  
Endure a bitter lot. The chiefs who late  
Were deemed their mightiest are within the ships,  
Wounded or stricken down. There Diomed, 30  
The gallant son of Tydeus, lies, and there  
Ulysses, the great spearman, wounded both ;  
And Agamemnon ; and Eurypylus,  
Driven from the field, an arrow in his thigh.  
Round them the healers, skilled in remedies, 35  
Attend and dress their painful wounds, while thou,  
Achilles, sittest here implacable.  
O, never be such fierce resentments mine  
As thou dost cherish, who art only brave  
For mischief ! Whom wilt thou hereafter aid, 40  
If now thou rescue not the perishing Greeks ?  
O merciless ! it cannot surely be  
That Peleus was thy father, or the queen  
Thetis thy mother ; the green sea instead  
And rugged precipices brought thee forth, 45  
For savage is thy heart. But if thou heed  
The warning of some god, if thou hast heard  
Aught which thy goddess-mother has received  
From Jove, send me at least into the war,  
And let me lead thy Myrmidons, that thus 50  
The Greeks may have some gleam of hope. And give  
The armor from thy shoulders. I will wear  
Thy mail, and then the Trojans, at the sight,  
May think I am Achilles, and may pause

From fighting, and the warlike sons of Greece, 55  
Tired as they are, may breathe once more, and gain  
A respite from the conflict. Our fresh troops  
May easily drive back upon their town  
The weary Trojans from our tents and fleet."

So spake he, sighing ; rash and blind, he asked 60  
Death for himself and evil destiny.

Achilles the swift-footed also drew  
A heavy sigh, and thus in turn he spake :—

"What, O divine Patroclus, hast thou said ?  
I fear no omen yet revealed to me ; 65  
Nor has my goddess-mother told me aught  
From Jove ; but ever in my heart and soul  
Rankles the painful sense of injury done  
By one who, having greater power, deprives  
An equal of his right, and takes away 70  
The prize he won. This is my wrong, and this  
The cause of all my bitterness of heart.  
Her whom the sons of Greece bestowed on me  
As my reward, a trophy of my spear,  
After the sack of a fenced city, — her 75  
Did Agamemnon, son of Atreus, take  
Out of my hands, as if I were a wretch,  
A worthless outcast. But let that affront  
Be with the things that were. It is not well  
To bear a grudge forever. I have said 80  
My anger should not cease to burn until  
The clamor of the battle and the assault  
Should reach the fleet. But go thou and put on

My well-known armor ; lead into the field  
My Myrmidons, men that rejoice in war, 85  
Since like a lowering cloud the men of Troy  
Surround the fleet, and the Achaians stand  
In narrow space close pressed beside the sea,  
And all the city of Ilium flings itself  
Against them, confident of victory, 90  
Now that the glitter of my helm no more  
Flashes upon their eyes. Yet very soon  
Their flying host would fill the trenches here  
With corpses, had but Agamemnon dealt  
Gently with me ; and now their squadrons close 95  
Around our army. Now no more the spear  
Is wielded by Tydides Diomed  
In rescue of the Greeks ; no more the shout  
Of Agamemnon's hated throat is heard ;  
But the man-queller Hector, lifting up 100  
His voice, exhorts the Trojans, who, in throngs,  
Raising the war-cry, fill the plain, and drive  
The Greeks before them. Gallantly lead on  
The charge, Patroclus ; rescue our good ships ;  
Let not the enemy give them to the flames, 105  
And cut us off from our desired return.  
Follow my counsel ; bear my words in mind ;  
So shalt thou win for me among the Greeks  
Great honor and renown, and they shall bring  
The beautiful maiden back with princely gifts. 110  
When thou hast driven the assailants from the fleet,  
Return thou hither. If the Thunderer,

Husband of Juno, suffer thee to gain  
That victory, seek no further to prolong  
The combat with the warlike sons of Troy, 115  
Apart from me, lest I be brought to shame,  
Nor, glorying in the battle and pursuit,  
Slaying the Trojans as thou goest, lead  
Thy men to Troy, lest from the Olympian mount  
One of the ever-living gods descend 120  
Against thee : Phœbus loves the Trojans well.  
But come as soon as thou shalt see the ships  
In safety ; leave the foes upon the plain  
Contending with each other. Would to Jove  
The All-Father, and to Pallas, and the god 125  
Who bears the bow, Apollo, that of all  
The Trojans, many as they are, and all  
The Greeks, not one might be reprieved from death,  
While thou and I alone were left alive  
To overthrow the sacred walls of Troy.” 130

So talked they with each other. Ajax, whelmed  
Beneath a storm of darts, meantime but ill  
Endured the struggle, for the will of Jove  
And the fierce foe prevailed. His shining helm  
Rang fearfully, as on his temples fell, 135  
Stroke following after stroke, the weapons hurled  
Against its polished studs. The buckler borne  
Firmly on his left arm, and shifted oft  
From side to side, had wearied it, and yet  
The Trojans, pressing round him, could not drive,  
With all their darts, the hero from his place. 141

Heavily heaved his panting chest ; his limbs  
Streamed with warm sweat ; there was no breathing-  
time ;

On danger danger followed, toil on toil.

Now, Muses, dwellers of Olympus, tell 145  
How first the galleys of the Greeks were fired.

Hector drew near, and smote with his huge sword  
The ashen spear of Ajax just below  
The socket of the blade, and cut the stem  
In two. The son of Telamon in vain 150  
Brandished the severed weapon, while afar  
The brazen blade flew off, and ringing fell  
To earth. Then Ajax in his mighty mind  
Acknowledged that the gods were in the war,  
And shuddered, knowing that the Thunderer 155  
Was thwarting all his warlike purposes,  
And willed the victory to Troy. The chief  
Withdrew beyond the reach of spears, while fast  
The eager enemy hurled the blazing brands  
At the swift ship, and wrapped the stern in flames  
Unquenchable. Achilles saw, and smote 161  
His thigh, and spake : " Patroclus, noble friend  
And knight, make haste : already I behold  
The flames that rage with fury at the fleet.  
Now, lest the enemy seize our ships and we 165  
Be barred of our return, put quickly on  
Thy armor ; be my task to call the troops."

He spake : Patroclus then in glittering brass  
Arrayed himself ; and first around his thighs

He put the beautiful greaves, and fastened them 170  
With silver clasps ; around his chest he bound  
The breastplate of the swift Æacides,  
With star-like points, and richly chased ; he hung  
The sword with silver studs and blade of brass  
Upon his shoulders, and with it the shield 175  
Solid and vast ; upon his gallant head  
He placed the glorious helm with horse-hair plume,  
That grandly waved on high. Two massive spears  
He took, that fitted well his grasp, but left  
The spear which great Achilles only bore, 180  
Heavy and huge and strong, and which no arm  
Among the Greeks save his could poise ; his strength  
Alone sufficed to wield it. 'T was an ash  
Which Chiron felled in Pelion's top, and gave  
To Peleus, that it yet might be the death 185  
Of heroes. Then he called, to yoke with speed  
The steeds, Automedon, whom he esteemed  
Next to Achilles, that great scatterer  
Of armies ; for he found him ever firm  
In battle, breasting faithfully its shock. 190  
Automedon led forth to take the yoke  
Xanthus and Balius, coursers that in speed  
Were like the wind. Podargè brought them forth  
To Zephyrus, while she, the Harpy, grazed  
By ocean's streams. Upon the outer side 195  
He joined to them the noble Pedasus,  
Brought by Achilles from the captured town  
Where ruled Eëtion. Though of mortal stock,

Well might he match with those immortal steeds.

Meanwhile Achilles armed the Myrmidons, 200  
Passing from tent to tent. Like ravening wolves,  
Terribly strong, that, having slain among  
The hills an antlered stag of mighty size,  
Tear and devour it, while their jaws are stained  
With its red blood, then gather in a herd 205  
About some darkly flowing stream, and lap  
The sullen water with their slender tongues,  
And drop the clots of blood from their grim mouths,  
And, although gorged, are fierce and fearless still, —  
So came the leaders of the Myrmidons, 210  
In rushing crowds, about the valiant friend  
Of swift *Æacides*. Among them stood  
*Achilles*, great in war, encouraging  
The charioteers and warriors armed with shields.

*Achilles*, dear to *Jupiter*, had led 215  
Fifty swift barks to *Ilium*, and in each  
Were fifty men, companions at the oar.  
O'er these he gave command to five ; himself,  
Supreme in power, was ruler over all.  
One band the nobly armed *Menestheus* led, 220  
Son of *Spercheius*. To that river-god,  
Beautiful *Polydora* brought him forth,  
Daughter of *Peleus* ; she, a mortal maid,  
Met an immortal's love. Yet *Borus*, son  
Of *Periëres*, owned the boy and took 225  
The mother for his bride, with princely dower  
*Eudorus* led the second band, a youth

Of warlike mould, whom Polymela bore,  
 Daughter of Phylas, graceful in the dance.  
 In secrecy she brought him forth, for once 230  
 The mighty Argus-queller saw the maid  
 Among the choir of those who danced and sang  
 At Dian's festival, the huntress-queen,  
 Who bears the golden shafts ; he saw and loved  
 And, climbing to her chamber, met by stealth 235  
 The damsel, and she bore a gallant son,  
 Eudorus, swift of foot and brave in war.  
 When Ilithyia, midwife goddess, gave  
 The boy to see the pleasant light of day,  
 The stout Echecleus, son of Actor, brought 240  
 The mother to his house, with liberal dower.  
 The aged Phylas reared the child she left  
 Tenderly as a son, and loved him well.  
 Pisander, warlike son of Mæmalus,  
 Commanded the third squadron ; none like him 245  
 Among the Myrmidons could wield the spear  
 Except Pelides. Phœnix, aged knight,  
 Led the fourth squadron. With the fifth and last  
 There came Alcimedon, Laerceus' son,  
 As leader. When their ranks were duly formed, 250  
 Achilles spake to them in earnest words : —  
 “ Now, Myrmidons, forget no single word  
 Of all the threats ye uttered against Troy  
 Since first my wrath began. Ye blame me much,  
 And say : ‘ Hard-hearted son of Peleus, sure 255  
 Thy mother must have suckled thee on gall ;

For sternly thou dost keep us in the ships,  
Unwilling as we are. We might, at least,  
Crossing the sea, return in our good ships,  
If thus thine anger is to last.' These words 260  
Ye utter oft when our assemblies meet,  
And now the great occasion is at hand  
Which ye have longed for ; now let him whose heart  
Is fearless meet the Trojans valiantly."

He spake, and roused their courage and their  
might , 265  
And as they heard their king they brought their ranks  
To closer order. As an architect  
Builds up, with closely fitting stones, the wall  
Of some tall mansion, proof against the blast,  
So close were now the helms and bossy shields. 270  
Shield leaned on shield, and helm on helm, and man  
On man, and on the glittering helmet-cones  
The horse-hair plumes with every motion touched  
Each other, so compact the squadrons stood.  
Two heroes, nobly armed, were at their head, 275  
Patroclus and Automedon, and both  
Had but one thought, — to combat in the van.

Entering his tent, Achilles raised the lid  
Of a fair coffer, beautifully wrought,  
Which silver-footed Thetis placed on board 280  
His bark, and filled with tunics, cloaks well lined,  
And fleecy carpets. There he also kept  
A goblet richly chased, from which no lip  
Of man, save his, might drink the dark red wine,

Nor wine be poured to any god save Jove, 285  
The mighty Father. This he took in hand  
And purified with sulphur first, and then  
Rinsed with clear water. Next, with washen hands,  
He drew the dark red wine, and stood without,  
In the open space, and, pouring out the wine, 290  
Prayed with his eyes turned heavenward, not un-  
heard

By Jupiter, who wields the thunderbolt.

“Dodonian Jove, Pelasgian, sovereign King,  
Whose dwelling is afar, and who dost rule  
Dodona winter-bound, where dwell thy priests, 295  
The Selli, with unwashen feet, who sleep  
Upon the ground! Thou once hast heard my prayer,  
And thou hast honored me, and terribly  
Avenged me on the Greeks. Accomplish yet  
This one request of mine. I shall remain 300  
Among the rows of ships, but in my stead  
I send my comrade, who will lead to war  
My vast array of Myrmidons. With him,  
O God of Thunders, send the victory.  
Make his heart bold ; let even Hector learn 305  
Whether my follower, though alone, can wage  
Successful war, or conquer only then  
When I go forth with him into the field  
Of slaughter. When he shall have beaten back  
The assailants from the fleet, let him return 310  
Unharm'd to my good galleys and to me.  
With all his arms and all his valiant men.”

So spake he, offering prayer, and Jupiter,  
 The Great Disposer, hearkened. Half the prayer  
 The All-Father granted him, and half denied : 315  
 To drive the storm of battle from the fleet  
 He granted, but denied his friend's return  
 In safety. When the warrior thus had prayed,  
 And poured the wine to Father Jove, he went  
 Into his tent again, and there replaced 320  
 The goblet in the coffer. Coming forth,  
 He stood before the entrance to behold  
 The terrible encounter of the hosts.

The newly armed, led by their gallant chief,  
 Patroclus, marched in warlike order forth, 325  
 And in high hope, to fall upon the foe.  
 As wasps, that by the wayside build their cells,  
 Angered from time to time by thoughtless boys, —  
 Whence mischief comes to many, — if by chance  
 Some passing traveller should unwittingly 330  
 Disturb them, all at once are on the wing,  
 And all attack him, to defend their young  
 So fearless and so fierce the Myrmidons  
 Poured from their fleet, and mighty was the din.  
 Patroclus with loud voice exhorted them : — 335

“ O Myrmidons, companions of the son  
 Of Peleus, bear in mind, my friends, your fame  
 For valor, and be men, that we who serve  
 Achilles, we who combat hand to hand,  
 May honor him by our exploits, and teach 340  
 Wide-ruling Agamemnon how he erred

Slighting the bravest warrior of the Greeks."

These words awoke the courage and the might  
Of all who heard them, and in close array  
They fell upon the Trojans. Fearfully 345  
The fleet around them echoed to the sound  
Of Argives shouting. When the Trojans saw,  
In glittering arms, Menœtius' gallant son  
And his attendant, every heart grew faint  
With fear ; the close ranks wavered ; for they thought  
That the swift son of Peleus at the fleet 351  
Had laid aside his wrath, and was again  
The friend of Agamemnon. Eagerly  
They looked around for an escape from death.

Then first Patroclus cast his shining spear 355  
Into the crowd before him, where they fought  
Most fiercely round the stern of the good ship  
Of brave Protesilaus. There it smote  
Pyræchmes, who had led from Amydon,  
On the broad Axius, his Pæonian knights. 360  
Through his right shoulder went the blade ; he fell,  
Heavily groaning, to the earth. His band  
Of warriors from Pæonia, panic-struck,  
Fled from Patroclus as they saw their chief  
Cut off, their bravest in the battle-field. 365  
So from the ship he drave the foe, and quenched  
The blazing fire. There lay the half-burnt bark,  
While with a mighty uproar fled the host  
Of Troy, and from between the beakèd ships  
Poured after them with tumult infinite 370

The Greeks. As when from some high mountain-top  
The God of Lightnings, Jupiter, sweeps off  
The overshadowing cloud, at once appear  
The watch-towers and the headland heights and  
lawns

All in full light, and all the unmeasured depth 375  
Of ether opens, so the Greeks, when thus  
Their fleet was rescued from the hostile flame,  
Breathed for a space ; and yet they might not cease  
From battle, for not everywhere alike  
Were chased the Trojans from the dark-hulled ships  
Before the Greeks, but struggled still to keep 381  
The mastery, and yielded but to force.

Then in that scattered conflict of the chiefs  
Each Argive slew a warrior. With his spear  
The brave son of Menœtius made a thrust 385  
At Areilochus, and pierced his thigh,  
Just as he turned away, and through the part  
Forced the keen weapon, splintering as it went  
The bone, and brought the Trojan to the ground ;  
And warlike Menelaus pierced the breast 390  
Of Thoas where the buckler left it bare,  
And took his life. The son of Phyleus saw  
Amphiclus rushing on, and with his spear  
Met him and pierced his leg below the knee,  
Where brawniest is the limb. The blade cut through  
The sinews, and his eyes were closed in night. 396  
There fought the sons of Nestor. One of these,  
Antilochus, transfix'd with his good spear

Atymnius through the flank, and brought him down  
At his own feet. With sorrow Maris saw 400  
His brother fall, and toward Antilochus  
Flew to defend the corpse ; but ere he strook,  
The godlike Thrasymedes, with a blow  
That missed not, smote his shoulder, tearing off  
With the spear's blade upon the upper arm 405  
The muscles from the bone. With ringing arms  
He fell, and darkness gathered o'er his eyes.  
Thus were two brothers by two brothers slain,  
And sent to Erebus ; two valiant friends  
Were they of King Sarpedon, and the sons 410  
Of Amisodarus, who reared and fed  
Chimera, the destroyer of mankind.

Oilean Ajax, springing forward, seized  
On Cleobulus, for the struggling crowd  
Hindered his flight. He took the Trojan's life, 415  
Smiting the neck with his huge-handled sword ;  
The blade grew warm with blood, and cruel fate  
Brought darkness o'er the dying warrior's eyes.  
Peneleus fought with Lycon ; each had cast  
His spear and missed his aim, and now with swords  
The twain encountered. Lycon dealt a stroke 421  
Upon the crested helmet of his foe,  
And the blade failed him, breaking at the hilt.  
Meantime Peneleus smote beneath the ear  
The neck of Lycon : deep the weapon went ; 425  
The severed head, held only by the skin,  
Dropped to one side, and life forsook the limbs.

Meriones, o'ertaking Acamas,  
In rapid flight, discharged a mighty blow  
On his left shoulder as he climbed his car ; 430  
He fell, and darkness gathered o'er his eyes.  
Then plunged Idomeneus the cruel spear  
Into the mouth of Erymas. The blade  
Passed on beneath the brain, and pierced the neck,  
And there divided the white bones. It dashed 435  
The teeth out ; both the eyes were filled with blood,  
Which gushed from mouth and nostrils as he  
breathed ;

And the black cloud of death came over him.  
Thus every Grecian leader slew his man.

As ravening wolves that spring on lambs and kids,  
And seize them, wandering wide among the hills 441  
Beyond the keeper's care, and bear them off,  
And rend with cruel fangs their helpless prey,  
So fiercely did the Achaians fling themselves  
Upon the men of Troy, who only thought 445  
Of flight from that tumultuous strife, and quite  
Forgot their wonted valor. All the while  
The greater Ajax sought to hurl his spear  
At Hector, clad in brazen mail, who yet,  
Expert in battle, kept his ample chest 450  
Hid by his bull's-hide shield, and, though he heard  
The hiss of darts and clash of spears, and saw  
The fortune of the field deserting him,  
Lingered to rescue his beloved friends.

As from the summit of Olympus spreads 455

A cloud into the sky that late was clear,  
When Jove brings on the tempest, with such speed  
In clamorous flight the Trojans left the fleet,  
Yet passed they not the trench in seemly plight.  
The rapid steeds of Hector bore him safe 460  
Across with all his arms, while, left between  
The high banks of the trench, the Trojan host  
Struggled despairingly. The fiery steeds,  
Harnessed to many a chariot, left it there  
With broken pole. Patroclus followed close, 465  
With mighty voice encouraging the Greeks,  
And meditating vengeance on the foe,  
That noisily ran on, and right and left  
Were scattered, filling all the ways. The dust  
Rose thick and high, and spread, and reached the  
clouds, 470

As with swift feet the Trojan coursers held  
Their way to Ilium from the tents and ships.  
Patroclus where he saw the wildest rout  
Drave thither, shouting threats. Full many a chief  
Fell under his own axle from his car, 475  
And chariots with a crash were overthrown.  
The swift, immortal horses which the gods  
Bestowed on Peleus leaped the trench at once,  
Eager to reach the plain. As eagerly  
Patroclus longed to overtake and smite 480  
Hector, whose steeds were hurrying him away.

As when, in autumn time, the dark-brown earth  
Is whelmed with water from the stormy clouds,

When Jupiter pours down his heaviest rains,  
Offended at men's crimes who override 485  
The laws by violence, and drive justice forth  
From the tribunals, heedless of the gods  
And their displeasure, — all the running streams  
Are swelled to floods, — the furious torrents tear  
The mountain slopes, and, plunging from the heights  
With mighty roar, lay waste the works of men, 491  
And fling themselves into the dark-blue sea, —  
Thus with loud tumult fled the Trojan horse.

Patroclus, having cut the nearest bands  
Of Troy in pieces, made his warriors turn 495  
Back to the fleet, and, eager as they were,  
Stopped the pursuit that led them toward the town.  
Then, in the area bounded by the sea,  
River, and lofty wall, he chased and smote  
And took full vengeance. With his glittering spear  
He wounded Pronoüs where the buckler left 501  
The breast exposed ; the Trojan with a clash  
Fell to the earth, and life forsook his limbs.  
Advancing in his might, Patroclus smote  
Thestor, the son of Enops, as he sat 505  
Cowering upon his sumptuous seat, o'ercome  
With fear, and dropped the reins. Through his  
right cheek  
Among the teeth Patroclus thrust his spear,  
And o'er the chariot's border drew him forth  
With the spear's stem. As when an angler sits 510  
Upon a jutting rock, and from the sea

Draws a huge fish with line and gleaming hook,  
So did Patroclus, with his shining spear,  
Draw forth the panting Trojan from his car,  
And shook him clear : he fell to earth and died. 515

As Eryalus then came swiftly on,  
Patroclus flung a stone, and on the brow  
Smote him ; the Trojan's head, beneath the blow,  
Parted in two within the helm ; he fell  
Headlong to earth, a prey to ghastly death. 520  
Then slew he Erymas, Amphoterus,  
Epaltes, Pyris, Ipheus, Echius,  
Tlepolemus, Damastor's son, and next  
Euippus ; nor was Polymelus spared,  
The son of Argias, — smitten all, and thrown, 525  
Slain upon slain, along their mother earth.

And now Sarpedon, as he saw his friends,  
The unbelted Lycians, falling by the hand  
Of Menœtiades, exhorted thus  
The gallant Lycians : “ Shame upon you all, 530  
My Lycians ! whither do you flee ? Be bold !  
For I myself will meet this man, and learn  
Who walks the field in triumph thus, and makes  
Such havoc in our squadrons ; for his hand  
Has laid full many a gallant warrior low.” 535

He spake, and from his car with all his arms  
Sprang to the ground, while on the other side  
Patroclus, as he saw him come, leaped down  
And left his chariot. As on some tall rock  
Two vultures, with curved talons and hooked beaks,

Fight screaming, so these two with furious cries 541  
 Advanced against each other. When the son  
 Of crafty Saturn saw them meet, his heart  
 Was touched with pity, and he thus bespake  
 His spouse and sister Juno : " Woe is me ! 545  
 Sarpedon, most beloved of men, is doomed  
 To die, o'ercome by Menœtiades.  
 And now I halt between two purposes, —  
 Whether to bear him from this fatal fight,  
 Alive and safe, to Lycia's fertile fields, 550  
 Or let him perish by his enemy's hand."

Imperial, large-eyed Juno answered thus : —  
 " What words, dread son of Saturn, hast thou said !  
 Wouldst thou deliver from the common lot  
 Of death a mortal doomed long since by fate ? 555  
 Do as thou wilt, but be thou sure of this, —  
 The other gods will not approve. And bear  
 In mind these words of mine. If thou shouldst send  
 Sarpedon home to Lycia safe, reflect  
 Some other god may claim the right, like thee, 560  
 To rescue his beloved son from death  
 In battle ; for we know that in the war  
 Round Priam's noble city are many sons  
 Of gods, who will with vehement anger see  
 Thy interposing hand. Yet if he be 565  
 So dear to thee, and thou dost pity him,  
 Let him in mortal combat be o'ercome  
 By Menœtiades, and when the breath  
 Of life has left his frame, give thou command

To Death and gentle Sleep to bear him hence 570  
To the broad realm of Lycia. There his friends  
And brethren shall perform the funeral rites ;  
There shall they build him up a tomb, and rear  
A column, — honors that become the dead."

She ceased, nor did the All-Father disregard 575  
Her words. He caused a bloody dew to fall  
Upon the earth in sorrow for the son  
Whom well he loved, and whom Patroclus soon  
Should slay upon the fertile plain of Troy,  
Far from the pleasant land that saw his birth. 580

The warriors now drew near. Patroclus slew  
The noble Thrasymelus, who had been  
Sarpedon's valiant comrade in the war.  
Below the belt he smote him, and he fell  
Lifeless. Sarpedon threw his shining lance ; 585  
It missed, but struck the courser Pedasus  
In the right shoulder. With a groan he fell  
In dust, and, moaning, breathed his life away.  
Then the two living horses sprang apart,  
And the yoke creaked, and the entangled reins 590  
Were useless, fastened to the fallen horse.  
Automedon, the mighty spearman, saw  
The remedy, and from his brawny thigh  
He drew his sword, and cut the outside horse  
Loose from his fellows. They again were brought  
Together, and obeyed the reins once more ; 595  
And the two chiefs renewed the mortal fight.

And now, again, Sarpedon's shining spear

Was vainly flung ; the point, in passing o'er  
Patroclus's left shoulder, gave no wound. 600

In turn, Patroclus, hurling not in vain  
His weapon, smote him where the midriff's web  
Holds the tough heart. He fell as falls an oak  
Or poplar or tall pine, which workmen hew  
Among the mountains with their sharpened steel 605  
To frame a ship. So he before his steeds  
And chariot fell upon the bloody dust,  
And grasped it with his hands, and gnashed his teeth.

As when a lion coming on a herd  
Seizes, amid the crowd of stamping beeves, 610  
A tawny and high-mettled bull, that dies  
Bellowing in fury in the lion's jaws, —  
Like him, indignant to be overcome,  
The leader of the bucklered Lycian host,  
Laid prostrate by Patroclus, called by name 615  
His dear companion, and addressed him thus :—

“ Beloved Glaucus, mighty among men !  
Now prove thyself a hero, now be bold.  
Now, if thou have a warrior's spirit, think  
Of nought but battle. Go from rank to rank, 620  
Exhorting all the Lycian chiefs to fight  
Around Sarpedon. Combat thou for me  
With thy good spear, for I shall be to thee  
A shame and a reproach through all thy days,  
If here the Greeks, beside whose ships I fall, 625  
Bear off my armor. Stand thou firm, and stir  
Thy people up to combat valiantly.”

While he was speaking, death crept o'er his sight  
And stopped his breath. Patroclus set his heel  
Against his bosom, and plucked out the spear ; 630  
The midriff followed it, and thus he drew  
The life and weapon forth at once. Meantime  
The Myrmidons held fast the snorting steeds,  
That, loosened from the Lycian's car, were bent  
On flight. The grief of Glaucus as he heard 635  
His comrade's voice was bitter, and his heart  
Ached at the thought that he could bring no aid.  
He seized his arm and pressed it in his grasp,  
For there the wound which Teucer's arrow left,  
When Glaucus stormed the wall and Teucer's shafts  
Defended it, still pained him grievously, 641  
And thus he prayed to Phœbus, archer-god : —

“ Give ear, O king ! wherever thou abide,  
In the opulent realm of Lycia, or in Troy ;  
For everywhere thou hearest those who cry 645  
To thee in sorrow, and great sorrow now  
Is on me. Grievous is the wound I bear ;  
Sharp are the pains that pierce my hand ; the blood  
Cannot be stanchèd ; my very arm becomes  
A burden ; I can wield the spear no more 650  
With a firm grasp, nor combat with the foe.  
A mighty chief — Sarpedon, son of Jove —  
Has perished, and the father came not nigh  
To aid his son. Yet come thou to my aid,  
O monarch-god ! and heal this painful wound, 655  
And give me strength to rally to the fight

The Lycian warriors, and myself contend  
Valiantly for the rescue of the dead.”

655

So prayed he : Phœbus hearkened, and at once  
Assuaged the pain, and stanchèd the purple blood  
In the deep wound, and filled his frame with strength.  
The warrior felt the change, rejoiced to know  
That with such friendly speed the mighty god  
Granted his prayer. And first he went among  
The Lycian chiefs, exhorting them to wage 665  
Fierce battle for Sarpedon. Then he sought,  
Walking with rapid strides, the Trojan chiefs,  
Agenor, nobly born, Polydamas,  
The son of Panthoüs, Æneas next,  
And Hector mailed in brass. By him he stood, 670  
And thus accosted him with wingèd words : —

“ O Hector, thou art careless of the fate  
Of thine allies, who for thy sake, afar  
From those they love, and from their native land,  
Pour out their lives ; thou bringest them no aid. 675  
Sarpedon lies in death, the chief who led  
The bucklered Lycians, who with justice swayed  
The realm of Lycia, and defended it  
With valor. Him hath brazen Mars beneath  
The weapon of Patroclus smitten down. 680  
Come then, my friends, repulse we gallantly  
These Myrmidons ; else will they bear away  
His armor and insult his corpse, to avenge  
The havoc we have made among the Greeks  
Who perished by our weapons at the fleet.” 685

He spake, and grief immitigable seized  
The Trojans ; for the slain, though stranger-born,  
Had been a pillar of the realm of Troy,  
And many were the troops that followed him,  
And he was bravest of them all in war. 690

Then rushed the Trojans fiercely on the Greeks,  
With Hector, sorrowing for Sarpedon's fall,  
Leading them on, while the bold-hearted chief,  
Patroclus Menœtiades, aroused  
The courage of the Greeks. He thus addressed 695  
The warriors Ajax, eager like himself  
For combat : " Be it now your welcome task,  
O warriors Ajax, to drive back the foe ;  
He who first sprang across the Grecian wall,  
Sarpedon, lies a corpse, and we must now 700  
Dishonor the dead chief, and strip from him  
His armor, and strike down with our good spears  
Whoever of his comrades shall resist."

He spake, and all were resolute to beat  
The enemy back ; and when, on either side, 705  
Trojans and Lycians, Myrmidons and Greeks,  
Had put their phalanxes in firm array,  
They closed, with dreadful shouts and horrid clash  
Of arms, in fight around the dead, while Jove  
Drew o'er that deadly fray an awful veil 710  
Of darkness, that the struggle for the corpse  
Of his dear son might rage more furiously.  
The Trojans first drave back the dark-eyed Greeks,  
For one was in the onset smitten down,

Not the least valiant of the Myrmidons, — 715  
The son of brave Agacles, nobly born  
Epeigeus, who aforetime, when he ruled  
The populous Budeium, having slain  
A noble kinsman, fled a suppliant  
To Peleus and the silver-footed queen, 720  
Thetis, his consort, and by them was sent,  
With terrible Achilles, to the coast  
Of courser-breeding Ilium and the siege  
Of Troy. As now he stooped to seize the dead,  
Illustrious Hector smote him with a stone 725  
Upon the forehead, cleaving it in two  
In the strong helmet ; headlong on the corse  
He fell, and cruel death crept over him.  
With grief Patroclus saw his comrade slain,  
And broke his way among the foremost ranks. 730  
As a swift hawk that chases through the air  
Starlings and daws, so didst thou dart among  
Trojans and Lycians, for thy wrath was roused,  
O knight Patroclus ! by thy comrade's death.  
And now his hand struck Sthenelaüs down, 735  
The dear son of Ithæmenes ; he flung  
A stone that crushed the sinews of the neck  
Back drew illustrious Hector, and with him  
The warriors who were fighting in the van.  
As far as one can send a javelin, 740  
When men contend in martial games, or meet  
Their deadly enemies in war, so far  
Withdrew the Trojans, and the Greeks pursued.

The leader of the bucklered Lycian host,  
Glaucus, was first to turn against his foes. 745  
He slew the brave Bathycles, the dear son  
Of Chalcon, who in Hellas had his home,  
And was the richest of the Myrmidons.  
The Lycian, turning on him suddenly  
As he drew near pursuing, sent his spear 750  
Right through his breast, and with a clash he fell.  
Great was the sorrow of the Greeks to see  
That valiant warrior fall ; the men of Troy  
Exulted, and pressed round him in a crowd.  
Nor lacking was the valor of the Greeks, 755  
Who met them manfully. Meriones  
Struck down a Trojan chief, Laogonus,  
Onetor's valiant son. His father stood  
Priest at the altar of Idæan Jove,  
And like a god was honored by the realm. 760  
Below the jaw and ear Meriones  
Smote him, and instantly the life forsook  
His limbs, and fearful darkness shrouded him.  
Straight at Meriones Æneas aimed  
His brazen spear to smite him, as he came, 765  
Beneath his buckler ; but the Greek beheld  
The weapon in the air, and, stooping low,  
Escaped it ; over him it passed, and stood  
Fixed in the earth behind him, where its stem  
Trembled, for now the rapid steel had spent 770  
Its force. As thus it quivered in the ground,  
Æneas, who perceived that it had left

His powerful hand in vain, was vexed, and said :  
 “Had I but struck thee, dancer as thou art,  
 Meriones, my spear had suddenly 775  
 Ended thy dancing.” Then Meriones,  
 The skilful spearman, answered : “Thou art brave,  
 But thou wilt find it hard to overcome  
 The might of all who gather to repulse  
 Thy onset. Thou art mortal, and if I, 780  
 Aiming at thee with my good spear, should pierce  
 Thy bosom, valiant as thou art and proud  
 Of thy strong arm, thy death would bring me praise,  
 And send thy soul where gloomy Pluto dwells.”

He spake ; the brave Patroclus heard, and thus  
 Rebuked him : “Why wilt thou, Meriones, 786  
 With all thy valor, stand to make a speech ?  
 The foe, my friend, will not be forced to leave  
 The corpse by insults ; some of them must die.  
 In deeds the issue of a battle lies ; 790  
 Words are for counsel. Now is not the time  
 To utter swelling phrases, but to fight.”

He ended, and went on ; the godlike man  
 Followed his steps. As when from mountain dells  
 Rises, and far is heard, a crashing sound 795  
 Where woodmen fell the trees, such was the noise  
 From those who fought on that wide plain, — the din  
 Of brass, of leather, and of tough bull’s-hide  
 Smitten with swords and two-edged spears. No eye,  
 Although of keenest sight, would then have known  
 Noble Sarpedon, covered as he lay, 801

From head to foot, with weapons, blood, and dust ;  
And still the warriors thronged around the dead.  
As when in spring-time at the cattle-stalls  
Flies gather, humming, when the milk is drawn, 805  
Round the full pails, so swarmed around the corpse  
The combatants ; nor once did Jove withdraw  
His bright eyes from the stubborn fray, but still  
Gazed, planning how Patroclus should be slain.  
Uncertain whether, in the desperate strife 810  
Over the great Sarpedon, to permit  
Illustrious Hector with his spear to lay  
The hero dead, and make his arms a spoil,  
Or spare him yet a while, to make the war  
More bloody. As he pondered, this seemed best  
That the brave comrade of Achilles first 816  
Should put to flight the Trojans and their chief,  
Hector the brazen-mailed, pursuing them  
Toward Troy with slaughter. To this end he sent  
Into the heart of Hector panic fear, 820  
Who climbed his car and fled, and bade the rest  
Flee also, for he saw how Jove had weighed  
The fortunes of the day. Now none remained,  
Not even the gallant Lycians, when they saw  
Their monarch lying wounded to the heart 825  
Among a heap of slain ; for Saturn's son  
In that day's strife had caused a multitude  
To fall in death. Now when the Greeks had stripped  
Sarpedon of the glittering brazen mail,  
The brave son of Menœtius bade his friends 830

Convey it to the hollow ships. Meanwhile  
The Cloud-compeller spake to Phœbus thus : —

“ Go now, beloved Phœbus, and withdraw  
Sarpedon from the weapons of the foe ;  
Cleans him from the dark blood, and bear him  
thence, 835

And lave him in the river-stream, and shed  
Ambrosia o’er him. Clothe him then in robes  
Of heaven, consigning him to Sleep and Death,  
Twin brothers, and swift bearers of the dead,  
And they shall lay him down in Lycia’s fields, 840  
That broad and opulent realm. There shall his  
friends

And kinsmen give him burial, and shall rear  
His tomb and column, — honors due the dead.”

He spake : Apollo instantly obeyed  
His father, leaving <sup>\*</sup>Ida’s mountain height, 845  
And sought the field of battle, and bore off  
Noble Sarpedon from the enemy’s spears,  
And laved him in the river-stream, and shed  
Ambrosia o’er him. Then in robes of heaven  
He clothed him, giving him to Sleep and Death, 850  
Twin brothers, and swift bearers of the dead,  
And they, with speed conveying it, laid down  
The corpse in Lycia’s broad and opulent realm.

Meantime Patroclus, urging on his steeds  
And charioteer, pursued, to his own hurt, 855  
Trojans and Lycians. Madman ! had he then  
Obeyed the counsel which Pelides gave,

The bitter doom of death had not been his.  
But stronger than the purposes of men  
Are those of Jove, who puts to flight the brave, 860  
And takes from them the victory, though he  
Impelled them to the battle ; and he now  
Urged on Patroclus to prolong the fight.

Who first, when thus the gods decreed thy death,  
Fell by thy hand, Patroclus, and who last ? 865  
Adrastus first, Autonoüs next, and then  
Echeclus ; then died Perimus, the son  
Of Meges ; then with Melanippus fell  
Epistor ; next was Elasmus o'ercome,  
And Mulus, and Pylartes. These he slew, 870  
While all the rest betook themselves to flight.

Then had the Greeks possessed themselves of Troy,  
With all its lofty portals, by the hand  
And valor of Patroclus, for his rage  
Was terrible beyond the rage of all 875  
Who bore the spear, had not Apollo stood  
On a strong tower to menace him with ill,  
And aid the Trojans. Thrice Patroclus climbed  
A shoulder of the lofty wall, and thrice  
Apollo, striking his immortal hands 880  
Against the glittering buckler, thrust him down ;  
And when, for the fourth time, the godlike man  
Essayed to mount the wall, the archer-god,  
Phœbus, encountered him with fearful threats :  
“ Noble Patroclus, hold thy hand, nor deem 885  
The city of the warlike Trojans doomed

To fall beneath thy spear, nor by the arm  
Of Peleus' son, though mightier far than thou."

He spake ; Patroclus, fearful of the wrath  
Of the archer-god, withdrew, and stood afar, 890  
While Hector, at the Scæan gates, restrained  
His coursers, doubtful whether to renew  
The fight by mingling with the crowd again,  
Or gather all his host within the walls  
By a loud summons. As he pondered thus, 895  
Apollo stood beside him in the form  
Of Asius, a young warrior and a brave,  
Uncle of Hector, the great horse-tamer,  
And brother of Queen Hecuba, and son  
Of Dymas, who in Phrygia dwelt beside 900  
The streams of the Sangarius. Putting on  
His shape and aspect, thus Apollo said : —

" Why, Hector, dost thou pause from battle thus ?  
Nay, it becomes thee not. Were I in might  
Greater than thou, as I am less, full soon 905  
Wouldst thou repent this shrinking from the war.  
Come boldly on, and urge thy firm-paced steeds  
Against Patroclus ; slay him on the field,  
And Phœbus will requite thee with renown."

He spake, and mingled in the hard-fought fray, 910  
While noble Hector bade his charioteer,  
The brave Cebriones, ply well the lash,  
And join the battle. Phœbus went before,  
Entering the crowd, and spread dismay among  
The Greeks, and gave the glory of the hour 915

To Hector and the Trojans. Little heed  
Paid Hector to the rest, nor raised his arm  
To slay them, but urged on his firm-paced steeds  
To meet Patroclus, who, beholding him,  
Leaped from his car. In his left hand he held 920  
A spear, and with the other lifting up  
A white, rough stone, the largest he could grasp,  
Flung it with all its force. It flew not wide,  
Nor flew in vain, but smote Cebriones,  
The warlike chief who guided Hector's steeds, 925  
A spurious son of Priam the renowned.  
The sharp stone smote his forehead as he held  
The reins, and crushed both eyebrows in; the bone  
Resisted not the blow; the warrior's eyes  
Fell in the dust before his very feet. 930

Down from the sumptuous seat he plunged, as dives  
A swimmer, and the life forsook his limbs.  
And this, Patroclus, was thy cruel jest: —

“Truly a nimble man is this who dives  
With such expertness. Were this, now, the sea, 935  
Where fish are bred, and he were searching it  
For oysters, he might get an ample store  
For many men, in leaping from a ship,  
Though in a storm, so skilfully he dives  
Even from the chariot to the plain. No doubt 940  
There must be divers in the town of Troy.”

He spake, and sprang upon Cebriones.  
With all a lion's fury, which attacks  
The stables and is wounded in the breast,

And perishes through his own daring ; thus, 945  
Patroclus, didst thou fall upon the slain,  
While Hector, hastening also, left his steeds,  
And both contended for Cebriones.

As lions for the carcass of a deer  
Fight on a mountain summit, hungry both, 950  
And both unyielding, thus two mighty men  
Of war, Patroclus Menœtiades

And glorious Hector, eager each to smite  
His adversary with the cruel spear,  
Fought for Cebriones. The slain man's head 955  
Was seized by Hector's powerful hand, whose grasp  
Relaxed not, while Patroclus held the foot ;  
And, thronging to the spot, the other Greeks  
And Trojans mingled in the desperate strife.

As when the east wind and the south contend 960  
In the open mountain grounds, and furiously  
Assail the deep old woods of beech and ash  
And barky cornel, flinging their long boughs  
Against each other with a mighty roar,  
And crash of those that break, so did the Greeks 965  
And Trojans meet with mutual blows, and slay  
Each other ; nor had either host a thought  
Of shameful flight. Full many a trenchant spear  
Went to its mark beside Cebriones,  
And many a wingèd arrow that had left 970  
The bowstring ; many a massive stone was hurled  
Against the ringing bucklers, as they fought  
Around the dead, while he, the mighty, lay

Stretched on the ground amid the eddying dust,  
Forgetful of his art of horsemanship.

975

While yet the sun was climbing to his place  
In middle heaven, the men of either host  
Were smitten by the weapons, and in both  
The people fell ; but when he stooped to the west  
The Greeks prevailed, and from that storm of darts  
And tumult of the Trojans they drew forth  
Cebriones, and stripped him of his arms.

981

Still rushed Patroclus onward, bent to wreak  
His fury on the Trojans. Fierce as Mars,  
He charged their squadrons thrice with fearful shouts,  
And thrice he laid nine warriors in the dust.

986

But as with godlike energy he made  
The fourth assault, then clearly was it seen,  
Patroclus, that thy life was near its end,  
For Phœbus terribly in that fierce strife  
Encountered thee. Patroclus saw him not  
Advancing in the tumult, for he moved  
Unseen in darkness. Coming close behind,  
He smote, with open palm, the hero's back  
Between the ample shoulders, and his eyes  
Reeled with the blow, while Phœbus from his head  
Struck the tall helm, that, clanking, rolled away  
Under the horses' feet ; its crest was soiled  
With blood and dust, though never till that hour  
Had dust defiled its horse-hair plume ; for once  
That helmet guarded an illustrious head,  
The glorious brows of Peleus' son, and now

990

995

1000

Jove destined it for Hector, to be worn  
 In battle ; and his death was also near.  
 The spear Patroclus wielded, edged with brass, 1005  
 Long, tough, and huge, was broken in his hands ,  
 And his broad buckler, dropping with its band,  
 Lay on the ground, while Phœbus, son of Jove,  
 Undid the fastenings of his mail. With mind  
 Bewildered, and with powerless limbs, he stood 1010  
 As thunderstruck. Then a Dardanian named  
 Euphorbus, son of Panthoüs, who excelled  
 His comrades in the wielding of the spear,  
 The race, and horsemanship, approaching, smote  
 Patroclus in the back with his keen spear, 1015  
 Between the shoulder-blades. Already he  
 Had dashed down twenty warriors from their cars,  
 Guiding his own, a learner in the art  
 Of war. The first was he who threw a lance  
 At thee, Patroclus, yet o'ercame thee not ; 1020  
 For, plucking from thy back its ashen stem,  
 He fled, and mingled with the crowd, nor dared  
 Await thy coming, though thou wert unarmed,  
 While, weakened by that wound and by the blow  
 Given by the god, Patroclus turned and sought 1025  
 Shelter from danger in the Grecian ranks ;  
 But Hector, when he saw the gallant Greek  
 Thus wounded and retreating, left his place  
 Among the squadrons, and, advancing, pierced  
 Patroclus with his spear, below the belt, 1030  
 Driving the weapon deep. The hero fell

With clashing mail, and all the Greeks beheld  
His fall with grief. As when a lion bears  
A stubborn boar to earth, what time the twain  
Fight on the mountains for a slender spring, 1035  
Both thirsty and both fierce, the lion's strength  
Lays prone his panting foe, so Priam's son  
Slew, fighting hand to hand, the valiant Greek,  
Son of Menœtius, who himself had slain  
So many. Hector gloried over him 1040  
With wingèd words : " Patroclus, thou didst think  
To lay our city waste, and carry off  
Our women captive in thy ships to Greece.  
Madman ! in their defence the fiery steeds  
Of Hector sweep the battle-field, and I, 1045  
Mightiest of all the Trojans, with the spear  
Will guard them from the doom of slavery.  
Now vultures shall devour thee, wretched youth !  
Achilles, mighty though he be, has brought  
No help to thee, though doubtless when he sent 1050  
Thee forth to battle, and remained within,  
He charged thee thus : ' Patroclus, flower of knights,  
Return not to the fleet until thy hand  
Hath torn the bloody armor from the corpse  
Of the man-queller Hector.' So he spake, 1055  
And filled with idle hopes thy foolish heart."

Then thou, Patroclus, with a faltering voice,  
Didst answer thus : " Now, Hector, while thou mayst,  
Utter thy boast in swelling words, since Jove  
And Phœbus gave the victory to thee. 1060

Easily have they vanquished me ; 't was they  
Who stripped the armor from my limbs, for else,  
If twenty such as thou had met me, all  
Had perished by my spear. A cruel fate  
O'ertakes me, aided by Latona's son, 1065  
The god, and by Euphorbus among men.  
Thou who shalt take my spoil art but the third ;  
Yet hear my words, and keep them in thy thought.  
Not long shalt thou remain alive ; thy death  
By violence is at hand, and thou must fall, 1070  
Slain by the hand of great Æacides."

While he was speaking, death stole over him  
And veiled his senses, while the soul forsook  
His limbs and flew to Hades, sorrowing  
For its sad lot, to part from life in youth 1075  
And prime of strength. Illustrious Hector thus  
Answered the dying man : " Why threaten me,  
Patroclus, with an early death ? Who knows  
That he, thy friend, whom fair-haired Thetis bore,  
Achilles, may not sooner lose his life, 1080  
Slain by my spear ? " He spake, and set his heel  
Upon the slain, and from the wound drew forth  
His brazen spear and pushed the corpse aside,  
And with the weapon hurried on to smite  
Godlike Automedon, the charioteer 1085  
Of swift Æacides ; but him the steeds  
Fleet-footed and immortal, which the gods  
Bestowed on Peleus, swiftly bore away.

## BOOK XVII.

THE warlike Menelaus, Atreus' son,  
Beheld Patroclus fall by Trojan hands,  
And came in glittering armor to the van  
To guard the body of the slain. As walks  
A heifer moaning round her new-born young, 5  
So fair-haired Menelaus stalked around  
The body of Patroclus, holding forth  
His spear and great round shield, intent to slay  
Whoever came against him. But the son  
Of Panthoüs, mighty spearman, not the less 10  
Intent to spoil the illustrious dead, drew near,  
And spake to warlike Menelaus thus : —

“Atrides Menelaus, reared by Jove,  
And leader of thy host, give way and leave  
The dead, and quit to me his bloody spoil ; 15  
For none of our brave Trojans and allies  
Smote him in deadly combat with the spear,  
Before me. Leave me therefore to receive  
The glory due me from the sons of Troy,  
Else will I smite thee too, and thou wilt lose 20  
Thy precious life !” Indignant at the word,  
The fair-haired Menelaus answered him : —

“O Father Jove ! unseemly boasts are these !  
For not the panther's nor the lion's might,  
Nor that of the fierce forest-boar whose rage 25

Is heightened into fury, is as great  
 As that which these distinguished spearmen, sons  
 Of Panthoüs, utter with their lips. And yet  
 The horseman Hyperenor did not long  
 Enjoy his youth when he with insolent words 30  
 Assailed me, and withstood me, — when he said  
 That I was the most craven wretch who bore  
 Arms in the Grecian host. He never turned,  
 I think, his footsteps homeward to delight  
 His reverend parents and beloved wife ; 35  
 And I, like his, will take thy life, if thou  
 Oppose me. Heed my counsel, and withdraw  
 Among the crowd, and so avoid my stroke  
 Before thou come to harm. He is a fool  
 Who only sees the mischiefs that are past.” 40

He said : Euphorbus, heeding not his words  
 Of warning, spake again : “ Now is my time,  
 Jove-nurtured Menelaus, to avenge  
 My brother, slain by thee, and over whom  
 Thou utteredst such swelling words, whose wife 45  
 In her new bridal chamber thou hast made  
 A widow, and upon her parents brought  
 Mourning and endless sorrow. It may make  
 The sorrow less, should I into the hands  
 Of Panthoüs and the noble Phrontis give 50  
 Thy head and armor. Let us now delay  
 The strife no longer : it will show with whom  
 The valor dwells, and who is moved by fear.”

He spake, and smote his enemy's round shield,

But pierced it not ; the stubborn metal turned 55  
The weapon's point. Then Menelaus, son  
Of Atreus, with a prayer to Jupiter,  
Struck, as Euphorbus made a backward step,  
His throat, and drave the weapon with strong hand  
Through the soft neck. He fell with clashing arms.  
His locks, which were like those the Graces wear, 62  
And ringlets, bound with gold and silver bands,  
Were drenched with blood. As when some husbandman

Rears in a lonely and well-watered spot  
An olive-tree with widely spreading boughs, 65  
Beautiful with fresh shoots, and putting forth  
White blossoms, gently waved by every wind,  
A sudden blast descends with mighty sweep  
And tears it from its bed, and lays it prone  
Upon the earth, — so lay Euphorbus, skilled 70  
To wield the spear and son of Panthoüs, slain  
And spoiled by Menelaus, Atreus' son.  
As when a lion of the mountain wilds,  
Fearless and strong, bears from the browsing herd  
The fairest of the kine, and breaks her neck 75  
With his strong teeth, and, tearing her, devours  
The bloody entrails, while a clamorous throng  
Of dogs and herdsmen, with incessant cries,  
Gather around him, yet approach him not,  
Withheld by fear, so of the warriors round 80  
The gallant Menelaus none could find  
The courage to encounter him ; and then

Atrides easily had borne away  
 The sumptuous armor worn by Panthoüs' son,  
 If envious Apollo had not moved 85  
 Hector to meet him. Putting on the form  
 Of Mentès, chief of the Ciconian band,  
 He said to him aloud, with wingèd words : —

“Hector, thou art pursuing what thy feet  
 Will never overtake, the steeds which draw 90  
 The chariot of Achilles. Hard it were  
 For mortal man to tame them or to guide,  
 Save for Achilles, goddess-born. Meanwhile  
 Hath warlike Menelaus, Atreus' son,  
 Guarding the slain Patroclus, overthrown 95  
 Euphorbus, bravest of the Trojan host,  
 A son of Panthoüs ; he will fight no more.”

Thus spake the god, and disappeared among  
 The warring squadrons. Bitter was the grief  
 That seized the heart of Hector as he looked 100  
 Along the ranks and saw the Greek bear off  
 The sumptuous arms, and saw the Trojan lie  
 Weltering in blood. At once he made his way  
 To the front rank, all armed in glittering brass,  
 And with loud shouts. As terrible he came 105  
 As Vulcan's inextinguishable fires.

The son of Atreus heard that mighty shout,  
 And thus to his great soul lamenting said : —

“If I abandon these rich spoils and leave  
 Patroclus, who has perished in my cause, 110  
 I fear the Greeks will look upon the act

With indignation. If, through dread of shame,  
I fight alone with Hector and his men,  
I fear to be o'erwhelmed by multitudes,  
For crested Hector leads the whole array 115  
Of Trojans hither. Yet why question thus ?  
For when a warrior ventures to assault  
One whom a god protects, a bitter doom  
Is his. Then none of all the Greeks should blame  
If I give way to Hector, whom a god 120  
Hath sent against me. Yet could I but hear  
The voice of mighty Ajax, we would both  
Return, and even against a god renew  
The combat, that we haply might restore  
Patroclus to Achilles, Peleus' son. 125  
Such in this choice of evils were the least."

As thus he mused, the men of Troy came on,  
With Hector at their head. The Greek gave way  
And left the slain. As when a lion, driven  
With pikes and clamor from the herdsman's stalls 130  
By men and dogs, unwillingly retreats,  
His valiant heart still raging in his breast,  
So did the fair-haired Menelaus leave  
Patroclus. When he reached the Grecian ranks,  
He turned and stood and looked about to find 135  
The mighty Ajax, son of Telamon,  
And him he soon beheld on the left edge  
Of battle, rallying there and heartening  
His men ; for Phœbus from above had sent  
A panic fear among them. To him then 140

The son of Atreus went in haste and said : —

“ Ajax, my friend, come hither where we fight  
Around Patroclus. Let us strive at least  
To bring Achilles back the hero's corpse,  
Though stripped ; for crested Hector hath his arms.”

He spake ; the courage of the warlike son 146  
Of Telamon was kindled by his words.

To the front rank he hastened, and with him  
Went fair-haired Menelaus. Hector there  
Had spoiled Patroclus of his glorious arms, 150

And now was dragging him apart to hew  
The head away with his keen sword, and give  
The body to the dogs of Troy. Just then  
Came Ajax, bearing, like a tower, his shield,  
And Hector mingled with the Trojan ranks, 155

And leaped into his car ; but first he gave  
His friends the glittering spoil to bear away  
To Troy, — a glory to the conqueror ;  
While Ajax, over Menœtiades

Holding his ample shield, stood firm as stands 160  
A lion o'er his whelps, when, as he comes  
Leading them through the wood, the hunters rush  
Upon him, and his look is terrible

As his knit eyebrows cover his fierce eyes.  
So Ajax moved around the hero's corpse, 165  
While warlike Menelaus by his side,  
The son of Atreus, stood in bitter grief.

Then with a look of anger, Glaucus spake —  
Son of Hippolochus, and chief among

The Lycians — thus to Hector : “ Though thy  
form, 170

Hector, be noble, yet in prowess thou  
Art wanting, and thy fame in feats of war  
Is not deserved, since thou dost fly the foe.  
Think whether thou alone, with others born  
In Troy, canst save the city and the state. 175

For henceforth will no Lycian fight for Troy  
Against the Greeks ; this conflict without end  
Has never earned them thanks. Inglorious chief !

How wilt thou be the shield of humbler men,  
If thou canst leave Sarpedon, who has been 180

Thy comrade and thy guest, to be the prey  
And spoil of the Greek warriors ? While he lived,  
Great was the aid he brought thy cause and thee,  
And now thou dost not seek to drive away  
The dogs from his neglected corpse. For this, 185

If any of the Lycians heed my words,  
They will go home, and imminent will be  
The ruin of thy city. If that firm

And resolute valor lived in Trojan hearts  
Which they should cherish who in the defence 190

Of their own country bear the toils and face  
The dangers of the field, we might this hour  
Drag off the slain Patroclus into Troy.

And should we bear him from the thick of fight  
To the great city of Priam, soon the Greeks 195

Would let us ransom the rich armor worn  
By our Sarpedon, and bring back his corpse ;

For he lies slain who was the bosom friend  
Of the most valiant chieftain at the fleet  
Of Greece and leader of her bravest men. 200

But thou, when great-souled Ajax fixed his eye  
Upon thee, didst not venture to remain  
And fight with him ; he is more brave than thou.’

The crested Hector frowned and thus replied : —

“Why, Glaucus, should a warrior such as thou 205

Utter such violent words ? My friend, I deemed  
That thou wert wise above all other men

Of fertile Lycia, but I now must blame

Thy judgment when thou say’st I shrink to meet

The mighty Ajax. I do neither dread 210

The battle’s fury nor the rush of steeds ;

But all-prevailing are the purposes

Of ægis-bearing Jove, who makes the brave

To flee, and takes from him the victory,

And then again impels him to the fight. 215

Come then, my friend, stand by me ; see if I

Skulk this time from the conflict, as thou say’st,

Or tame the courage of whatever Greek,

The bravest, who defends Patroclus slain.”

He spake, and, shouting, cheered the Trojans on :

“Trojans and Lycians and Dardanians, trained 221

To combat hand to hand, let it be seen,

My friends, that ye are men, and still retain

Your ancient valor ; while I buckle on

The glorious armor of the illustrious son 225

Of Peleus, taken from Patroclus slain.”

So `spake the crested Hector, and withdrew  
From the fierce conflict, and with rapid steps  
O`ertook his comrades as they bore away  
Townward the glorious arms of Peleus' son. 230  
There from that deadly strife apart he stood,  
And changed his coat of mail. He gave his own  
To his companions, to be carried thence  
To sacred Ilium, and he buckled on  
The immortal armor of Achilles, son 235  
Of Peleus, which the gods of heaven bestowed  
Upon his father, who in his old age  
Consigned them to Achilles ; but the son  
Was never in that armor to grow old.

And when the Cloud-compeller Jove beheld 240  
Hector apart, accoutred in the arms  
Of Peleus' godlike son, he shook his head,  
And to himself he said : " Unhappy man !  
Death even now is near to thee, and yet  
Is not in all thy thoughts. Thou puttest on 245  
The heavenly armor of the terrible chief,  
Before whom others tremble ; thou hast slain  
His friend, the brave and gentle, and hast stripped,  
To do him shame, the armor from his limbs.  
Yet will I for the moment give to thee 250  
Fresh triumphs, since Andromache shall ne'er  
Receive, when thou returnest from the field,  
The armor of Pelides from thy hands."

The son of Saturn spake, and gave the nod  
With his dark brows. Well did that coat of mail 255

Suit Hector's form. Meantime the god of war  
 In all his fierceness entered Hector's breast :  
 Fresh vigor filled and nerved his frame ; he went  
 Along the ranks of his renowned allies  
 With shouts ; that glittering armor made him seem 260  
 The large-souled son of Peleus. To them all  
 He spake in turn, encouraging their hearts, —  
 To Mesthles, Glaucus, and Thersilochus,  
 Medon, Deisenor, and Hippothoüs,  
 Asteropæus, Phorcys, Chromius, 265  
 And Ennomus the Augur ; these the chief  
 Exhorted to the fight with wingèd words : —

“ Hear me, ye mighty throng of our allies,  
 Dwellers of nations round us ! Not to make  
 Our army vast in numbers did I send 270  
 To summon you, each from his native town,  
 But that your willing valor might defend  
 The wives and children of the sons of Troy  
 From the assailing Greeks. I therefore give  
 Most freely of our substance in large gifts 275  
 And banquets, that ye all may be content ;  
 And now let some of you move boldly on  
 To do or die, which is the chance of war.  
 To him who from the field will drag and bring  
 The slain Patroclus to the Trojan knights, 280  
 Compelling Ajax to give way, — to him  
 I yield up half the spoil ; the other half  
 I keep, and let his glory equal mine.”

He spake, and all that mighty multitude

With lifted lances threw themselves against      285  
 The Grecian ranks. They hoped to bear away  
 The dead from Ajax, son of Telamon.

Ah, idle hope ! that hero o'er the dead  
 Took many a Trojan's life. Then Ajax thus  
 To Menelaus, great in battle, spake : —      290

“O friend, O Menelaus, reared by Jove,  
 No longer now I hope our safe return  
 From battle. Not the greatest of my fears  
 Is for Patroclus, whom the dogs of Troy  
 And birds of prey full quickly will devour,      295  
 But for my life and thine. That cloud of war,  
 Hector, o'ershadows all, and over us  
 Impends the doom of death. Yet let us call  
 Our mighty men, if they perchance may hear.”

He spake, and Menelaus, great in war,      300  
 Obeyed his wish and shouted to the Greeks : —

“O friends, the princes and the chiefs of Greece,  
 Who at the public feasts with Atreus' sons —  
 King Agamemnon and his brother chief —  
 Drink wine, — who each command a host, and hold  
 Your honors and your state from Jove, — my eyes  
 Cannot discern you in the thick of fight ;  
 But some of you, who cannot bear to leave  
 Patroclus to the dogs of Troy, draw near !”

He spake ; Oilean Ajax, swift of foot,      310  
 Heard and came forward, hastening through the  
 fight ;

And after him Idomeneus, who brought

Meriones, his armor-bearer, fierce  
As the man-slayer Mars. But who could tell  
The names of all the other Greeks that sprang 315  
To mingle in the strife? The Trojans made  
The first assault, and Hector led them on.

As at the mouth of some great river, swoln  
By rains from Jove, the mighty ocean-wave  
Meets it with roaring, and the cliffs around 320  
Rebellow, while the surges toss without,  
With such a clamor came the Trojans on,  
While round Patroclus closed, with one accord,  
The Greeks, protected by their brazen shields,  
And o'er their shining helmets Saturn's son 325  
Poured darkness. For when Menœtiades  
Yet lived, attendant upon Peleus' son,  
Jove looked on him with no unkind regard,  
And now he would not that his corse should feed  
The enemy's dogs, and therefore moved his friends  
To rescue him. At first the Trojans drave 331  
The dark-eyed Greeks before them ; back they fell  
And left the dead ; yet, fiercely as they came,  
The Trojans slew no man, but dragged away  
The dead. A moment, and no more, the Greeks 335  
Fell back ; for Ajax quickly rallied them, —  
Ajax, who, next to Peleus' valiant son,  
Excelled them all in form and feats of war ;  
He through the foremost warriors brake, as strong  
As a wild bear that on the mountain's side 340  
Breaks through the shrubs, and scatters with a bound

A band of youths and dogs. The illustrious son  
Of honored Telamon thus put to rout  
The Trojan phalanxes environing  
Patroclus, in the hope to bear him thence 345  
Townward with glory. There Hippothoüs, son  
Of Lethus the Pelasgian, having bound  
A thong about the sinewy ankle, toiled  
To drag away the slain man by the foot  
From that fierce strife, — a grateful spectacle 350  
To Hector and the Trojans. Yet on him  
A vengeance which no friendly arm could ward  
Fell suddenly. The son of Telamon  
Rushed through the crowd, and in close combat  
smote

His helmet's brazen cheek. That plumèd helm 355  
Was cleft by the huge spear and vigorous hand,  
And where the weapon struck Hippothoüs,  
Mingled with blood the brain gushed forth; the life  
Forsook his limbs; he dropped from nerveless hands  
The foot of brave Patroclus, and beside 360  
The corpse fell headlong, — far from the rich fields  
Of his Larissa, never to repay  
With gentle cares in their old age the love  
Of his dear parents; for his life was short,  
Slain by the spear of Ajax, large of soul. 365

Then Hector aimed again his shining spear  
At Ajax, who perceived it as it came,  
And just avoided it. The weapon struck  
Schedius, the valiant son of Iphitus,

And bravest of the Phocians, whose abode 370  
 Was Panopeus the famous, where he ruled  
 O'er many men. Beneath the collar-bone  
 It pierced him, and passed through ; the brazen  
                   point

Came out upon the shoulder ; to the ground  
 He fell, his armor clashing with his fall. 375  
 Then Ajax smote the valiant Phorcys, son  
 Of Phœnops, in the navel. Through the mail  
 The brazen weapon broke, and roughly tore  
 The entrails. In the dust he fell, and clenched  
 The earth with dying hands. The foremost ranks,  
 Led by illustrious Hector, at the sight 381  
 Yielded the ground ; the Greeks with fearful shouts  
 Dragged off the bodies of Hippothoüs  
 And Phorcys, and despoiled them of their arms.

Then would the Trojans have been put to flight 385  
 Before the warlike Greeks, and, craven-like,  
 Gone up to Troy, and great had been the fame  
 Gained by the might and courage of the Greeks,  
 Beyond what Jupiter designed to give,  
 Had not Apollo brought Æneas forth 390  
 By putting on the form of Periphas,  
 The herald and the son of Epytus,  
 Who in that office as a prudent friend  
 And counsellor had served, till he grew old,  
 The father of Æneas. In his shape 395  
 Thus spake Apollo, son of Jupiter : —

“ Æneas, ye might even hold the towers

Of lofty Ilium safe against a god,  
Were ye to act as some whom I have seen, —  
Valiant, and confident in their own might 400  
And multitude of dauntless followers.  
And now Jove favors us and offers us  
The victory o'er the Greeks, and yet ye flee  
In abject terror, and refuse to fight.”

He spake ; Æneas, looking at him, knew 405  
The archer-god, and with a mighty voice  
Called out to Hector : “ Hector ! thou and all  
Who lead the troops of Troy, and our allies,  
Great shame it were if we were put to rout  
Before the warlike Greeks, and beaten back 410  
To Troy like cowards. Standing by my side,  
One of the gods already hath declared  
That Jupiter, All-wise, is our ally  
In battle. Let us therefore boldly fall  
Upon the Greeks, nor suffer them to bear 415  
Patroclus unmolested to their fleet.”

He spake, and, springing to the foremost ranks,  
Stood firm ; the Trojans also turned and faced  
The Achaïans. Then Æneas with his spear  
Struck down Leocritus, the gallant friend 420  
Of Lycomedes and Arisbas' son.  
The warlike Lycomedes saw his fall  
With grief, and came and cast his shining spear  
At Apisaon, son of Hippasus,  
A shepherd of the people. Underneath 425  
The midriff, through the liver went the spear,

And he fell lifeless. He had come to Troy  
From rich Pæonia, and was great in war,  
Next to Asteropæus. As he saw  
His comrade fall, Asteropæus, moved 430  
By grief, advanced to combat with the Greeks,  
But could not ; for the group that stood around  
Patroclus showed a fence of shields, and held  
Their spears before them. Ajax moved among  
The warriors, charging them that none should leave  
The corpse, and none should step beyond the rest 436  
To strike the foe, but stay to guard the dead,  
And combat hand to hand. Such was the charge  
Of mighty Ajax. All the earth around  
Was steeped with blood, and many a corpse was  
heaped 440

On corpse of Trojans and their brave allies,  
And of the Greeks, for even on their side  
The strife was not unbloody, though of Greeks  
There perished fewer ; each was on the watch  
To ward the battle's dangers from the rest. 445

Then did they fight like fire. You could not say  
The sun was safe, nor yet the moon, so thick  
A darkness gathered over the brave men  
Around the corpse of Menœtiades.  
The other Trojans and the well-armed Greeks 450  
Fought freely under the clear sky ; the sun  
Shed o'er them his full brightness ; not a cloud  
Shadowed the earth, or rested on the hills.  
From time to time they paused, and warily

They shunned each other's cruel darts, and kept 455  
Far from each other, while in the mid-war  
Struggled the combatants in darkness, galled  
By the remorseless weapons of their foes.  
Yet Thrasymedes and Antilochus,  
Two famous Grecian warriors, had not learned 460  
That excellent Patroclus was no more,  
But thought that, still alive, he led the war  
Against the Trojans, fighting in the van.  
They watched the flight and slaughter of the Greeks,  
And fought apart, for Nestor so enjoined, 465  
Who sent them to the battle from the fleet.

But they who held the middle space around  
The friend of swift Æacides, maintained  
A desperate strife all day ; the knees, the thighs,  
The feet, the hands, the eyes of those who fought 470  
Were faint with weariness and foul with sweat.  
As when an ample ox-hide, steeped in fat,  
Is given to workmen to be stretched, they stand  
Around it in a circle, pulling it,  
Till forth the moisture issues, and the oil 475  
Enters the skin, and by that constant strain  
From many hands the hide is duly stretched,  
So in small space the warriors drew the dead  
Hither and thither ; they of Ilium strove  
To drag it to the city, they of Greece 480  
To bear it to the fleet. The tumult then  
Was terrible, and neither Mars himself,  
The musterer of hosts, nor Pallas, roused

To her intensest wrath, had they been near  
 The struggle, would have seen it with disdain. 485  
 Such deadly strife of steeds and men was held  
 O'er slain Patroclus by the will of Jove.

The great Achilles knew not yet the fate  
 Of his Patroclus, for the warriors fought  
 Far from the fleet, beside the wall of Troy. 490  
 He never thought of him as one whose death  
 Was near, but trusted that, when once he reached  
 The Trojan wall, he would return alive ;  
 Nor ever deemed he that without his aid,  
 Or even with it, would Patroclus sack 495  
 The city. This was what he oft had heard  
 From Thetis, who disclosed to him apart  
 The counsel of Almighty Jupiter.  
 Yet had his mother never once revealed  
 The present evil, — that the one whom most 500  
 He loved of all his friends should perish thus.

Still round the dead they fought with their keen  
 spears,  
 And slew each other. Then of the mailed Greeks  
 Some one would say : " O friends, it were disgrace  
 Should we fall back upon our roomy ships. 505  
 First let the dark earth swallow us ; for this  
 Were better than to let the Trojan knights  
 Drag off the dead in triumph to their town."

And some among the large-souled sons of Troy  
 Would say : " O friends, though all of us should fall  
 Beside this corpse, let no one turn and flee." 511

Thus they, encouraging each other, spake,  
And thus the fight went on. The iron din  
Rose through the waste air to the brazen heaven.

Meantime aloof from battle stood the steeds 515  
Of Peleus' son, and sorrowed when they knew  
That he who guided them lay stretched in dust  
By Hector's slaughtering hand. Automedon,  
The brave son of Diores, often tried  
The lash, and gentle words as oft, and oft 520  
Shouted forth threats ; yet neither would they move  
Toward the broad Hellespont, where lay the fleet,  
Nor toward the Greeks in combat, but remained  
Motionless as a funeral column, reared  
To mark a man's or woman's tomb. So stood 525  
The coursers yoked to that magnificent car,  
With drooping heads, and tears that from their lids  
Flowed hot, for sorrow at the loss of him  
Who was their charioteer, and their fair manes,  
Sweeping the yoke below, were foul with dust. 530  
The son of Saturn saw their grief, and shook  
His head in pity, saying to himself :—

“ Why did the gods bestow you, luckless pair,  
On Peleus, — on a king of mortal birth, —  
You who shall never feel old age or death? 535  
Was it that ye might share with human-kind  
Their sorrows ? for the race of mortal men  
Of all that breathe and move upon the earth  
Is the most wretched. Yet of this be sure, —  
That ye shall never in that sumptuous car 540

Bear Hector. Is it not enough that he  
Should wear that armor, uttering idle boasts?  
And now will I infuse into your limbs  
Spirit and strength, that ye may safely bear  
Automedon across the battle-field 545  
To where the roomy galleys lie. I yet  
Must give more glory to the men of Troy,  
And they must slay until they come again  
To the good ships of Greece, — until the sun  
Goes down and sacred darkness covers all.” 550

So spake the god, and breathed into the steeds  
New life and vigor. From their manes they shook  
The dust, and flew with that swift car among  
The Greeks and Trojans. With the Trojan throng,  
Automedon, though mourning his slain friend, 555  
Maintained the fight; he rushed upon their ranks,  
A vulture pouncing on a flock of geese.  
Swiftly he passed from out the Trojan throng;  
Swiftly again he charged their phalanxes  
In fierce pursuit. Yet slew he none of those 560  
Whom he pursued; he could not guide at once  
The steeds and cast the spear, when seated thus  
Alone within that sacred car. At last  
A friend, the valorous Alcimedon,  
Laërtes' son, of Æmon's line, beheld 565  
His plight, and, standing near his chariot, said:—

“What god, Automedon, hath prompted thee  
To these mad acts, and stolen thy better sense,  
Fighting alone among the foremost ranks

Of Trojan warriors, thy companion slain, 570  
And Hector in the field, who boastfully  
Stalks in the armor of Æacides?"

And thus Automedon, Diore's son,  
Made answer: "Who is there among the Greeks  
Able like thee, Alcimedon, to rein 575  
And curb the spirit of immortal steeds?  
None were there save Patroclus while he lived,  
Wise as a god in council. Death and fate  
Now hold him. To thy hand I give the lash  
And shining reins, while I descend and fight." 580

He spake, and into his swift chariot sprang  
Alcimedon, and took the lash and reins.  
Automedon leaped down. As Hector saw,  
He thus bespake Æneas at his side:—

"Æneas, leader of the men of Troy, 585  
Equipped in brazen armor, I have seen  
Those coursers of the swift Æacides  
Driven through the battle by unwarlike hands,  
And 't is my hope, if thou wilt give thine aid,  
To seize them. They who guide them will not dare  
To stand and face us when we make the charge." 591

He spake; Anchises' valiant son complied,  
And, sheltered by their shields of tough ox-hide,  
Well dried and firm, and strong with plates of brass,  
The twain went forward. With them at their side 595  
Went Chromius and Aretus, nobly formed,  
In hope to lead away the high-necked steeds,  
Their guardians slain. Vain dreamers! they were  
doomed

Not without bloody penance to return  
 From that encounter with Automedon, 600  
 Who prayed to Father Jove, and whose faint heart  
 Was strengthened and made bold. And thus the chief  
 Said to his faithful friend Alcimedon :—

“Keep not the steeds thou guidest far from me,  
 Alcimedon, but let them ever breathe 605  
 Upon my shoulders. Hector, Priam’s son,  
 I think, will not give over this assault  
 Before he either slays us, and ascends  
 The car to which these steeds with flowing manes  
 Are yoked, and puts to flight the phalanxes 610  
 Of Argive warriors, or himself is slain.”

He spake, and called to both the Ajaxes  
 And Menelaus : “Ye who lead the Greeks,”  
 He said, and named the chieftains, “give in charge  
 The dead to your best warriors, to surround 615  
 And guard the corpse, and drive away the foe ;  
 But hasten to avert the evil day  
 From us who are alive. For even now  
 Hector comes rushing through the deadly fight,  
 And brings Æneas ; these are the most brave 620  
 Of all the Trojan army. On the knees  
 Of the great gods the issue rests. I too  
 Will cast the spear, and leave the rest to Jove.”

He spake, and lifting his huge spear he smote  
 The round shield of Aretus. There the blade 625  
 Stopped not, but, entering, pierced him through the  
 belt.

As, when a vigorous youth with a keen axe  
 Strikes a wild bull behind the horns, and there  
 Severs the sinews, forward leaps the beast  
 And falls, — Aretus, springing forward thus, 630  
 Fell headlong. In the Trojan's entrails still  
 Quivered the spear, and life forsook his limbs.

Then Hector aimed, to smite Automedon,  
 His shining spear. The Greek beheld and stooped,  
 And shunned the brazen weapon. Down it came, 635  
 And plunged into the earth, and stood, its stem  
 Still shaken with the blow, and spent its force.  
 Now would the twain have turned, and hand to hand  
 Fought with their swords, when suddenly came up  
 The warriors Ajax, hastening, at the call 640  
 Of their companion, through the crowd, and stayed  
 The combat. Hector and Æneas then,  
 And Chromius, of the godlike form, withdrew  
 Through caution, leaving on the battle-field  
 Aretus lying mangled. The fierce chief 645  
 Automedon despoiled the dead, and spake  
 Boastfully : " Somewhat lighter on my heart  
 Lies now my grief for Menœtiades,  
 Though I have slain a man of meaner note."

As thus he spake, he threw the bloody spoils 650  
 Into his chariot, mounting to the seat,  
 His feet and hands all crimson with the blood,  
 As when a lion has devoured an ox.  
 Then round Patroclus raged the strife again,  
 Murderous and sad to see ; for Pallas there 655

Inflamed the strife, sent down from heaven by Jove,  
 To rouse the courage of the Greeks, since such  
 Was now his will. As when the god displays  
 To men a purple rainbow in the skies,  
 A sign of war or of a bitter storm, 660  
 Which drives the laborer from his task, and makes  
 The cattle droop, so, in a purple cloud  
 Concealed, she went among the Greeks, and filled  
 Their hearts with valor. Taking first the form  
 Of Phoenix, and his clear, unwearied voice, 665  
 She spake in stirring words to Atreus' son,  
 The gallant Menelaus, standing near :  
 "Shame and dishonor will it be to thee,  
 O Menelaus, if, beneath the walls  
 Of Troy, the hungry dogs should tear the corpse 670  
 Of him who was in life the faithful friend  
 Of great Achilles. Fight thou therefore on  
 Bravely, and bid the other Greeks be brave."

And Menelaus, great in war, rejoined :  
 "O Phoenix, aged father, who wert born 675  
 In days long past, would but Minerva give  
 The needed strength, and ward from me the stroke  
 Of weapons, then would I stand by and guard  
 Patroclus, for his death hath filled my heart  
 With grief. But Hector's rage is like the rage 680  
 Of fire ; he ceases not to slay ; for Jove  
 Gives to his spear the glory of the day."

He spake, and well was blue-eyed Pallas pleased  
 That first to her of all the deities

He prayed ; and therefore did she nerve his chest 685  
And knees with strength, and put into his heart  
The daring of the fly, that, often driven  
From man, returns and bites, and finds how sweet  
Is human blood. Such resolute zeal she woke  
In his stern soul, as quickly he approached 690  
Patroclus, and sent forth his shining spear.

Among the Trojans was Eëtion's son,  
Podes, the rich and brave, whom Hector held  
In highest honor, choosing him to be  
Companion of his feasts. Him in the waist 695  
The fair-haired Menelaus, as he fled,  
Smote, driving home the weapon. With a clash  
He fell to earth, and Menelaus drew  
The slain away among the Grecian ranks.  
Then came Apollo, putting on the form 700  
Of Phænops, son of Asius, whose abode  
Was in Abydos, and whom Hector most  
Esteemed of all his guests. The archer-god  
Drew near to Hector, and bespake him thus : —

“Hector, what other Greek will fear thee now, 705  
Since thou dost shrink from Menelaus, deemed  
Effeminate in war? Behold, he drags  
Away a warrior from thy host ; his hand  
Hath slain thy faithful friend, Eëtion's son,  
Brave Podes, fighting in the foremost ranks.” 710

He spake : a cloud of sorrow overspread  
The soul of Hector. Armed in glittering brass,  
He went among the warriors in the van.

Then did the son of Saturn lift on high  
 His fringed ægis, gleaming ; with a cloud 715  
 He covered Ida, sent his lightnings down,  
 And thundered terribly, and made the mount  
 Shake to its base, and gave the victory  
 To Troy, and put to rout the Grecian host.

Peneleus of Bœotia led the fight. 720  
 A spear that lighted on the shoulder-tip,  
 As he came forward, wounded him. The blade,  
 Hurl'd by Polydamas in close assault,  
 Entered and grazed the bone. Then Hector pierced  
 The wrist of Leïtus, Alectryon's son, 725  
 And made him leave the combat. As he fled  
 He looked around in fear, nor hoped again  
 To wield the spear against the men of Troy.  
 As Hector followed Leïtus, he met  
 The long spear of Idomeneus, which struck 730  
 His corselet near the pap ; the weapon broke  
 Sheer at the socket, and the Trojans raised  
 A shout, while Hector at Idomeneus  
 Let fly his spear. It missed the chief, but smote  
 Cœranus, who from pleasant Lyctus came, 735  
 The friend and follower of Meriones.  
 For on that day Idomeneus had come  
 From his good ships on foot, and great had been  
 The triumph of the Trojans at his fall,  
 If Cœranus had not with his swift steeds 740  
 Passed near and bid him mount. 'T was thus he  
 came

To save Idomeneus from death, and yield  
To the man-queller Hector his own life ;  
The javelin entered underneath the ear,  
By the jaw-bone, where, forcing out the teeth, 745  
It cleft the tongue in twain. He fell to earth,  
And dropped the reins. Meriones stooped down  
And took them from the dust in his own hands,  
And thus bespake Idomeneus : "Ply well  
The lash, until thy coursers reach the fleet, 750  
For thou mayst clearly see that victory  
To-day is not upon the Grecian side."

He spake : Idomeneus, fear-smitten, lashed  
The long-maned steeds that hurried toward the fleet.  
Nor now did Menelaus nor his friend, 755  
The valiant Ajax, fail to see that Jove  
Had changed the vantage to the side of Troy.  
And thus the son of Telamon began : —

"Alas ! the feeblest mind can now perceive  
That Father Jove is with the sons of Troy, 760  
And gives to them the glory of the day.  
Their weapons smite, whoever sends them forth,  
Coward or brave, for Jove directs them all ;  
Ours fall to earth in vain. But let us now  
Consult how best to bear the corpse away, 765  
And how, returning, we may meet our friends  
With joy ; for they are grieved as they behold  
Our plight, and fear that we may not withstand  
The fiery onset and invincible arm  
Of the man-queller Hector. Would there were 770

Some comrade who would bear to Peleus' son  
 The tidings of the day ! for he, I think,  
 Has not yet heard that his dear friend is slain.  
 None such can I behold of all the Greeks,  
 For they are shrouded all — their steeds and they —  
 In darkness. Father Jove, deliver us 776  
 From darkness ; clear the heavens and give our eyes  
 Again to see. Destroy us if thou wilt,  
 But O destroy us in the light of day ! ”

He spake : the All-Father saw him shedding tears,  
 And pitied him, and bade the shadows flee, 781  
 And swept away the cloud. The sun looked forth,  
 And all the battle lay in light. Then thus  
 To warlike Menelaus Ajax said : —

“ O Menelaus, foster-child of Jove, 785  
 Look round and see if yet Antilochus,  
 The large-souled son of Nestor, is alive,  
 And bid him bear the tidings in all haste  
 To the great son of Peleus, that the one  
 Of all his friends whom most he loved is slain.” 790

He spake, and Menelaus, great in war,  
 Complied, and hastened forth, as from a fold  
 A lion stalks away, that long has kept  
 In fear the hounds and herdsman, who all night  
 Have watched to drive him from their well-fed  
 beeves, 795

While, eager for his prey, he rushes oft  
 Against them, but in vain, for many a spear  
 Is hurled at him, and many a blazing brand,

Which, fierce for ravin as he is, he dreads,  
 Till sullenly at early morn he goes. 800  
 So from Patroclus went unwillingly  
 The valiant Menelaus, for he feared  
 Lest, panic-struck, the Greeks should leave his  
 corpse

The enemy's prey. Thus earnestly he prayed  
 The warriors Ajax and Meriones :— 805

“Ye warriors Ajax, leaders of the Greeks!  
 And thou, Meriones! let each of you  
 Bear well in mind how kindly was the mood  
 Of poor Patroclus; gentle in his life  
 Was he to all, and now is with the dead.” 810

The fair-haired Menelaus, speaking thus,  
 Withdrew. He looked around him as he went,  
 As looks an eagle, bird of sharpest sight—  
 So men declare—of all the fowls of air,  
 From which, though high in heaven, the nimble hare  
 Beneath the thicket is not hid; he stoops, 816  
 And takes the creature's life. Thy piercing eyes,  
 O Menelaus, thus on every side  
 Were turned, in eager scrutiny, to find  
 Among the multitude of Greeks the son 820  
 Of Nestor living. Him he soon descried  
 Upon the battle's left, where manfully  
 He cheered his fellows on. The fair-haired son  
 Of Atreus came and stood by him, and said :—  
 “Stay, foster-child of Jove, Antilochus! 825  
 And listen to the sorrowful news I bring

Of what should ne'er have been. Thou must have  
well

Perceived, I think, that some divinity  
Doth heap disaster on our host, and give  
The victory to the Trojans. He is dead, — 830  
Patroclus, — the most valiant of the Greeks,  
And great their sorrow is. Now hasten thou  
To the Greek galleys ; let Achilles know  
The tidings ; he may haply bring the corpse,  
Stripped as it is, unmangled to the fleet, 833  
For crested Hector has the arms he wore."

He spake, and at his words Antilochus  
Was horror-struck ; in grief too great for speech,  
Tears filled his eyes, and his clear voice was choked.  
Yet heeded he the mandate. Laying off 840  
His arms, he gave them to his blameless friend,  
Laodocus, who with his firm-paced steeds  
Came toward him. Thus prepared he ran ; his feet  
Carried him swiftly from the battle-field  
To bear the evil news to Peleus' son. 845

Yet Menelaus, foster-child of Jove,  
Thy spirit did not prompt thee to remain  
And aid thy hard-pressed comrades at the spot  
Whence thou didst send Antilochus, and where  
The Pyleans longed to keep him. Yet he sent 850  
The noble Thrasymedes to their aid,  
While he returned to where Patroclus lay,  
And stood beside the warriors there, and said : —

"I sent to swift Achilles at the fleet

A messenger, yet think he will not come. 855  
Though royal Hector's deed hath roused his rage,  
Unarmed he cannot meet the sons of Troy.

Consult we then how we may best convey  
The body to the ships, and how ourselves  
Escape the doom of death by Trojan hands." 860

The mighty Ajax, son of Telamon,  
Replied : " O Menelaus far-renowned,  
Well hast thou spoken. Lift thou now the corse,  
Thou and Meriones, and place yourselves  
Beneath it, and convey it from the field. 865  
We, following you, will combat with the sons  
Of Troy and noble Hector, — we who, named  
Alike and one in spirit, oft have borne  
The fury of the battle side by side."

He ended, and the warriors in their arms 870  
Raised with main strength the body from the ground.  
The Trojans, as they saw it borne away,  
Shouted behind them, rushing on like hounds  
That spring upon a wounded forest-boar  
Before the hunter-youths now pressing close 875  
Upon his flank, to tear him, then again,  
Whene'er he turns upon them in his strength,  
Retreating in dismay, and put to flight  
Hither and thither. Thus, in hot pursuit  
And close array, the Trojans following strook 880  
With swords and two-edged spears ; but when the  
twain

Turned and stood firm to meet them, every cheek

Grew pale, and not a single Trojan dared  
Draw near the Greeks to combat for the corse.

Thus rapidly they bore away the dead 885  
Toward their good galleys from the battle-field.  
Onward with them the furious battle swept,  
As spreads a fire that, kindled suddenly,  
Seizes a city, and the dwellings sink

In the consuming blaze, and a strong wind 890  
Roars through the flame. Such fearful din of steeds  
And warriors followed the retreating Greeks.

As from a mountain summit strong-backed mules  
Drag over the rough ways a ponderous beam  
Or mast, till weary with the mighty strain 895  
And streaming sweat, so they with resolute toil  
Bore off the dead. Behind them as they went  
Their two defenders kept the foe aloof.

As when a river-dike o'ergrown with trees  
Crosses a plain, and holds the violent course 900  
Of the swoln stream in check, and, driving back  
The waters, spreads them o'er the level fields,  
Nor can their fury force a passage through, —  
So did the warriors Ajax hold in check

The Trojans ; yet they followed close, and two 905  
More closely than the rest, — Æneas, son  
Of old Anchises, and the illustrious chief,  
Hector. As when a company of daws  
Or starlings, startled at a hawk's approach,  
The murderous enemy of the smaller birds, 910  
Take wing with piercing cries, so, driven before

The might of Hector and Æneas, fled  
 The Greeks with clamorous cries, and thought no  
     more  
 Of combat. In the trench and near it lay  
 Many fair weapons, which the fugitive Greeks     915  
 Had dropped in haste, and still the war went on.

## BOOK XVIII.

AS thus they fought with all the rage of fire,  
 Antilochus, the nimble-footed, came  
 With tidings to Achilles. Him he found  
 Before his lofty galleys, deep in thought  
 Of what he knew had happened. With a sigh     5  
 The hero to his mighty spirit said :—  
     “ Ah me ! why should the Grecians thus be driven  
 In utter disarray across the plain ?  
 I tremble lest the gods should bring to pass  
 What most I dread. My mother told me once     10  
 That the most valiant of the Myrmidons,  
 While yet I live, cut off by Trojan hands,  
 Shall see the sun no more. It must be so :  
 The brave son of Menœtius has been slain.  
 Unhappy ! ’T was my bidding that, when once     15  
 The enemy with his firebrands was repulsed,  
 He should not think to combat gallantly  
 With Hector, but should hasten to the fleet.”

As thus he mused, illustrious Nestor's son  
Drew near Achilles, and with eyes that shed 20  
Warm tears he gave his sorrowful message thus :—

“Son of the warlike Peleus, woe is me !  
For bitter are the tidings thou must hear  
Of what should not have been. Patroclus lies  
A naked corpse, and over it the hosts 25  
Are fighting ; crested Hector hath his arms.”

He spake, and a black cloud of sorrow came  
Over the chieftain. Grasping in both hands  
The ashes of the hearth, he showered them o'er  
His head, and soiled with them his noble face. 30  
They clung in dark lumps to his comely vest.  
Prone in the dust of earth, at his full length,  
And tearing his disordered hair, he lay.  
Then wailed aloud the maidens whom in war  
He and Patroclus captured. Forth they came, 35  
And, thronging round him, smote their breasts and  
swooned.

Antilochus mourned also, and shed tears,  
Holding Achilles by the hand, for much  
His generous nature dreaded that the chief  
Might aim at his own throat the sword he wore. 40

Loud were the hero's cries, and in the deep  
His gracious mother, where she sat beside  
Her aged father, heard them. She too raised  
A wail of sorrow. All the goddesses,  
Daughters of Nereus, dwelling in the depths 45  
Of ocean, gathered to her side. There came

Glaucè, Thaleia, and Cymodocè,  
 Nesæa, Speio, Halia with large eyes,  
 And Thoa, and Cymothöè ; nor stayed  
 Actæa, Limnoreia, Melita, 50  
 Amphithöè, Iæra, Agavè,  
 Doto, and Proto, and Dynamenè.  
 There came Dexamenè, Amphinomè,  
 Pherusa, Callianira, Panopè,  
 Doris, and Galateia, the renowned. 55  
 With these Nemertes and Apseudes came,  
 And Callianassa. Clymenè was there,  
 Janeira and Janassa, and with them  
 Mæra, and Amatheia with bright hair,  
 And Orithya, and whoever else, 60  
 Children of Nereus, bide within the deep.  
 The concourse filled the glimmering cave ; they beat  
 Their bosoms, while the sorrowing Thetis spake : —  
 “ Hear, sister Nereids, that ye all may know  
 The sharpness of my sorrows. Woe is me, 65  
 Unhappy ! Woe is me ! in evil hour,  
 The mother of a hero, — me who gave  
 Birth to so noble and so brave a son,  
 The first among the warriors, saw him grow  
 Like a green sapling, reared him like a plant 70  
 Within a fruitful field, and sent him forth  
 With his beaked ships to Ilium and the war  
 Against the Trojans. Never shall I see  
 That son returning to his home, the halls  
 Of Peleus. While he lives and sees the light 75

Of day his lot is sorrow, nor can I  
Help him in aught, though at his side ; and yet  
I go to look on my beloved son,  
And learn from him what grief, while he remains  
Aloof from war, o'ertakes him in his tent." 80

She spake, and left the cavern. All the nymphs  
Went with her weeping. Round their way the waves  
Of ocean parted. When they reached the fields  
Of fertile Troas, up the shore they went  
In ordered files to where, a numerous fleet, 85  
Drawn from the water, round Achilles lay  
The swift ships of the Myrmidons. To him  
His goddess mother came, and with a cry  
Of grief embraced the head of her dear son,  
And, mourning o'er him, spake these wingèd  
words :— 90

"Why weepest thou, my son ? What sorrow now  
O'ercomes thy spirit ? Speak, and hide it not.  
All thou didst pray for once, with lifted hands,  
Has been fulfilled by Jove ; the sons of Greece,  
Driven to their galleys, and with thy good help 95  
Withdrawn from them, are routed and disgraced."

The swift Achilles, sighing deeply, made  
This answer : "O my mother ! true it is  
Olympian Jove hath done all this for me ;  
But how can that delight me, since my friend, 100  
My well-beloved Patroclus, is no more ?  
He whom, of all my fellows in the war,  
I prized the most, and loved as my own self,

Is lost to me, and Hector, by whose hand  
He was cut off, has spoiled him of his arms, — 105  
His dreaded arms, a wonder to the sight  
And glorious, which the gods of heaven bestowed  
On Peleus, sumptuous bridal gifts, when thou  
Wert led by them to share a mortal's bed.  
Yet would that thou hadst evermore remained 110  
Among the immortal dwellers of the deep,  
And Peleus had espoused a mortal maid,  
Since now thy heart must ache with infinite grief  
For thy slain son, whom thou shalt never more  
Welcome returning to his home. No wish 115  
Have I to live or to concern myself  
In men's affairs, save this : that Hector first,  
Pierced by my spear, shall yield his life, and pay  
The debt of vengeance for Patroclus slain."

And Thetis, weeping, answered : " O my son ! 120  
Soon must thou die ; thou sayest true ; that fate  
Hangs over thee as soon as Hector dies."

Again the swift Achilles, sighing, spake :  
" Then quickly let me die, since fate denied  
That I should aid my friend against the foes 125  
That slew him. Far from his own land he fell,  
And longed for me to rescue him. And now,  
Since I am never more to see the land  
I love, and since I went not to defend  
Patroclus, nor the other Greeks, my friends, 130  
Of whom so many have fallen by the hand  
Of noble Hector, but beside the fleet

Am sitting here, a useless weight on earth,  
 Mighty in battle as I am beyond  
 The other Grecian warriors, though excelled 135  
 By other men in council, — would that Strife  
 Might perish among gods and men, with Wrath,  
 Which makes even wise men cruel, and, though sweet  
 At first as dropping honey, growing, fills  
 The heart with its foul smoke. Such was my rage,  
 Aroused by Agamemnon, king of men. 141  
 Yet now, though great my wrong, let things like  
 these

Rest with the past, and, as the time requires,  
 Let us subdue the spirit in our breasts.  
 I go in quest of Hector, by whose hand 145  
 My friend was slain. My death will I accept  
 Whene'er to Jove and to the other gods  
 It shall seem good to send it. Hercules,  
 Though mighty and beloved of Jupiter,  
 The son of Saturn, could not shun his death, 150  
 For fate and Juno's cruel wrath prevailed  
 Against him. I shall lie in death like him,  
 If a like fate be measured out for me.  
 Yet now shall I have glory ; I shall do  
 What many a Trojan and Dardanian dame, 155  
 Deep-bosomed, wiping with both hands the tears  
 From their fair cheeks, shall bitterly lament ;  
 And well shall they perceive that, till this hour,  
 I paused from war. Thou lov'st me ; but seek not  
 To keep me from the field, for that were vain." 160

The silver-footed Thetis thus rejoined :  
" Truly, my son, thy purpose is not ill,  
To rescue thy endangered friends from death.  
But with the Trojans are thy beautiful arms,  
Brazen and dazzling bright ; their crested chief, 165  
Hector, exults to wear them : no long space,  
I think, will he exult ; his death is near.  
Yet go not to the battle-field until  
Thine eyes shall look upon me yet again.  
I come to-morrow with the sun, and bring 170  
Bright arms, the work of Vulcan's royal hand."

So having said, and turning from her son,  
She thus bespake her sisters of the sea :  
" Return to the broad bosom of the deep,  
To its gray Ancient and my father's halls, 175  
And tell him all. I hasten to ascend  
The summits of Olympus, there to ask  
Of Vulcan, the renowned artificer,  
Armor of glorious beauty for my son."

She spake : at once they plunged into the deep, 180  
While Thetis, silver-footed goddess, sought  
Olympus, whence it was her hope to bring  
New armor for her son. As thus her feet  
Bore her toward heaven, the Achaians, fleeing fast,  
With infinite clamor, driven before the arm 185  
Of the man-queller Hector, reached the ships  
And Hellespont. Nor could the well-armed Greeks  
Bear off Patroclus from the shower of darts ;  
For rushing on them came both foot and horse,

And Hector, son of Priam, like a flame 190  
In fury. Thrice illustrious Hector seized  
The body by the heels to drag it off,  
And called his Trojans with a mighty shout.  
Thrice did the chieftains Ajax, terrible  
In resolute valor, drive him from the dead. 195  
Yet kept he to his purpose, confident  
In his own might, now charging through the crowd,  
Now standing firm and shouting to his men,  
And never losing ground. As when, at night,  
Herdsmen that watch their cattle strive in vain 200  
To drive a lion, fierce and famine-pinched,  
From some slain beast, so the two Ajaxes,  
With all their valor, vainly strove to keep  
Hector, the son of Priam, from the corpse.  
And now would he have dragged it thence, and won  
Infinite glory, had not Iris come — 205  
The goddess whose swift feet are like the wind —  
To Peleus' son, a messenger from heaven,  
In haste, unknown to Jupiter and all  
The other gods, — for Juno sent her down, — 210  
To bid the hero arm. She came and stood  
Beside him, speaking thus with wingèd words :—  
“Pelides, rise, most terrible of men,  
In rescue of Patroclus, over whom  
They struggle fiercely at the fleet ; for there 215  
They slay each other, — these who fight to keep  
The dead, and those, the men of Troy, who charge  
To drag him off to Ilium's airy heights ;

And chief, illustrious Hector longs to seize  
The corpse, and from the delicate neck to hew 220  
The head, and fix it on a stake. Arise,  
Loiter no longer ;—rise, ashamed to leave  
Patroclus to be torn by Trojan dogs.  
For thine will be the infamy, if yet  
The corpse be brought dishonored to thy tent.” 225

The swift Achilles listened and inquired :  
“Which of the gods, O Iris, speaks by thee?”  
And Iris, whose swift feet are like the wind,  
Answered : “The glorious spouse of Jupiter,  
Juno, hath sent me. Even Saturn’s son, 230  
On his high throne, knows not that I am sent,  
Nor any other of the gods who dwell  
Upon Olympus overspread with snow.”

“But how,” the swift Achilles asked again,  
“Shall I go forth to war? They have my arms, 235  
And my beloved mother strictly bade  
That I should put no armor on until  
I saw her face again. She promised me  
A suit of glorious mail from Vulcan’s hand.  
Nor know I any warrior here whose arms 240  
Might serve me, save, perhaps, it were the shield  
Of Telamonian Ajax, who, I hope,  
Is in the van, and dealing death among  
The foe, in vengeance for Patroclus slain.”

Then the swift-footed Iris spake again : 245  
“They have thy glorious armor ; that we know  
But go thou to the trench, and show thyself

To them of Troy, that, haply smit with fear,  
They may desist from battle, and the host  
Of Grecian warriors, overtoiled, may breathe 250  
In a brief respite from the stress of war."

So the fleet Iris spake, and passed away,  
And then arose Achilles, dear to Jove,  
While o'er his ample shoulders Pallas held  
Her fringed ægis. The great goddess caused 255  
A golden cloud to gather round his head  
And kindled in the cloud a dazzling flame.  
And as when smoke, ascending to the sky,  
Hangs o'er some city in a distant isle,  
Which enemies beleaguer, swarming forth 260  
From their own city, and in hateful strife  
Contend all day, but when the sun goes down  
Forthwith blaze many bale-fires, sending up  
A brightness which the neighboring realms may see,  
That haply they may send their ships and drive 265  
The war away, — so from the hero's head  
That flame streamed upward to the sky. He came  
Without the wall and stood beside the trench,  
Nor mingled with the Greeks, for he revered  
His mother's words. He stood and called aloud, 270  
And Pallas, from the host, returned his shout, —  
A shout that carried infinite dismay  
Into the Trojan squadrons. As the sound  
Of trumpet rises clear when deadly foes  
Lay siege to a walled city such was heard 275  
The clear shout uttered by Æacides.

The hearts of all who heard that brazen voice  
Were troubled, and their steeds with flowing manes  
Turned backward with the chariots, — such the  
dread

Of coming slaughter. When the charioteers 286  
Beheld the terrible flame that played unquenched  
Upon the brow of the magnanimous son  
Of Peleus, lighted by the blue-eyed maid  
Minerva, they were struck with panic fear.  
Thrice o'er the trench Achilles shouted ; thrice 285  
The men of Troy and their renowned allies  
Fell into wild disorder. Then there died,  
Entangled midst their chariots, and transfixed  
By their own spears, twelve of their bravest chiefs.  
The Greeks bore off Patroclus from the field 290  
With eager haste, and placed him on a bier,  
And there the friends that loved him gathered round  
Lamenting. With them swift Achilles came,  
The hot tears on his cheeks, as he beheld  
His faithful comrade lying on his bier, 295  
Mangled with many wounds, whom he had sent  
With steeds and car to battle, never more  
To welcome him alive on his return.

Now Juno, large-eyed and august, bade set  
The never-wearied sun ; unwillingly 300  
He sank into the ocean streams. Then paused  
The noble Greeks from that ferocious strife,  
Deadly in equal measure to both hosts.  
The Trojans also paused, and from their cars

Unharnessed the fleet steeds, and ere they took 305  
Their evening meal assembled to consult.  
Standing they held the council ; no man cared  
To sit, for all were trembling from the hour  
When, long a stranger to the bloody field,  
Achilles showed himself again. And now 310  
The son of Panthoüs, wise Polydamas,  
Began to speak. Beyond the rest he saw  
Things past and things to come, and he had been  
Hector's companion, born in the same night,  
Mighty in speech as Hector with the spear. 315  
With prudent admonitions thus he spake : —

“Consider well, my friends. My counsel is  
That we return, nor wait the holy morn  
Here, by the fleet and in the open plain,  
Far from our city ramparts. While this man 320  
Was wroth with Agamemnon, we maintained  
A strife of far less peril with the Greeks,  
And I was ever ready to encamp  
By night beside the galleys, which we hoped  
To make our prize ; but now I fear the might 325  
Of swift Pelides. He will not remain  
Content upon the space between the fleet  
And town, where Greeks and Trojans wage a war  
Of changeful fortune, but will strive to take  
The city, and to carry off our wives. 330  
March we then homeward. Let my words prevail, —  
It must be so. The gentle Night now keeps  
The nimble-footed hero from the war.

But if to-morrow, issuing forth in arms,  
He find us here, there are among us those 335  
Who will have cause to know him. Gladly then  
Will he find refuge who escapes his arm  
In sacred Troy, and many a Trojan corpse  
Will feed the dogs and vultures. May mine ear  
Hear of it never. But if ye will heed 340  
My words, though sorrowful, ye shall be safe  
Assembled in the city squares at night.  
The lofty towers and gates, with massive beams  
Polished and strongly fitted each to each,  
Will keep the town. To-morrow we shall take, 345  
At dawn, our station on the towers, arrayed  
In armor, and his difficult task will be,  
Far from his ships, to fight us from below ;  
And after he has tired his high-necked steeds  
With coursing round the ramparts to and fro, 350  
Back to his galleys he must go ; nor yet  
With all his valor can he force his way  
Into the town to lay its dwellings waste, —  
The dogs will feed upon his carcass first."

And crested Hector answered with a frown : 355  
"The counsel thou hast given, Polydamas,  
Pleases me not, — that we return to be  
Pent up in Troy. Are ye not weary yet  
Of lying long imprisoned within walls  
And towers? The time has been that in all lands,  
Wherever human speech is heard, the fame 360  
Of Priam's city, for its treasured gold

And brass, was in all mouths. Those treasures now  
 Have passed away ; our dwellings have them not.  
 Much that we had was sold on Phrygia's coast, 365  
 And in Mæonia's pleasant land, for Jove  
 The mighty was displeased with us. But now,  
 When politic Saturn's son hath granted me  
 To win great glory at the fleet, and hold  
 The Greeks imprisoned by the sea, refrain,  
 Idler, from laying counsels such as these  
 Before the people. Not a Trojan here  
 Will follow them, nor would I suffer it.  
 Now hearken all, and act as I advise :  
 First banquet, rank by rank, throughout the host, 375  
 And set your guards, and each of you keep watch ;  
 And then, if any Trojan stands in fear  
 For his possessions, let him bring them all  
 Into the common stock, to be consumed ;  
 Better that we enjoy them than the Greeks. 380  
 To-morrow, with the dawn and all in arms,  
 We will do battle at the roomy ships  
 Valiantly. If in truth the noble son  
 Of Peleus choose to rise and to defend  
 The ships, so much the worse for him, since I 385  
 Shall not for him desert the field, but stand  
 Firmly against him, whether he obtain  
 The victory or I. The chance of war  
 Is equal, and the slayer oft is slain."

So Hector spake : the Trojans shouted forth 390  
 Applause, the madmen ! Pallas took away

Their reason ; all approved the fatal plan  
Of Hector ; no one ventured to commend  
The sober counsel of Polydamas.

And then they banqueted throughout the host ; 395  
But all night long the Achaians mourned with tears  
Patroclus, while Pelides in the midst,  
Leading the ceaseless lamentation, placed  
His slaughter-dealing hands upon the breast  
Of his companion with continual sighs. 400

As a maned lion, from whose haunt within  
The thick, dark wood a hunter has borne off  
The whelps, returning finds them gone, and grieves,  
And roams the valleys, tracking as he goes  
The robber, bent to find him, for his rage 405  
Is fierce, — with such fierce sorrow Peleus' son  
Spake, deeply sighing, to his Myrmidons : —

“ O, idle were the words which once I spake,  
When in our palace-halls I bade the chief  
Mencæus bear a cheerful heart. I said 410  
That I would bring to Opus yet again,  
Laden with spoil from Ilium overthrown,  
His valiant son. But Jove doth not fulfil  
The plans of men. That both of us should stain  
Earth with our blood in Troy was the decree 415  
Of fate, and never will the aged knight  
Peleus receive me in his palace-halls,  
Returning from the war, nor Thetis, she  
Who gave me birth ; the earth will hold me here.  
And now, since after thee I take my place 420

In earth, Patroclus, I will not perform  
Thy funeral rites before I bring to thee  
The arms and head of the magnanimous chief  
Hector, who slew thee. By thy funeral pile  
I will strike off in vengeance for thy death 425  
The heads of twelve illustrious Trojan youths.  
Thou meanwhile, lying at the beakèd ships,  
Shalt be lamented night and day, with tears,  
By many a Trojan and Dardanian maid,  
Deep-bosomed, won by our victorious spears 430  
After hard wars and opulent cities sacked."

Thus having said, the great Achilles bade  
Place a huge tripod on the fire in haste,  
To cleanse Patroclus from the clotted blood.  
They brought and set upon the glowing hearth 435  
A tripod for the bath, and in it poured  
Water, and piled the wood beneath. The flame  
Crept up the vessel's rounded sides and warmed  
The water. When within the murmuring brass  
It boiled, they washed the dead, and with rich oil 440  
Anointed him, and filled the open wounds  
With ointment nine years old ; and laying him  
Upon a couch, they spread from head to foot  
Fine linen over him, and covered all  
With a white mantle. Through the hours of night  
The Myrmidons, lamenting their dead chief, 445  
Wept round the swift Achilles. Then did Jove  
Thus to his wife and sister Juno speak :—

"Large-eyed, imperial Juno, thou hast now

Accomplished thy desire, for thou hast roused 450  
The swift Achilles. There is not a doubt  
The long-haired Argives owe their birth to thee."

And large-eyed Juno answered : "What strange  
words,

Austere Saturnius, hast thou said? A man,  
A mortal far less skilled in shaping means 455  
To compass ends, might do what I have done  
Against his fellow-man. Then should not I —  
Who boast to be the chief of goddesses  
By birthright, and because I bear the name  
Of wife to thee who rulest o'er the gods — 460  
Plan evil to the Trojans, whom I hate?"

So talked they. Silver-footed Thetis came  
Meanwhile to Vulcan's halls, eternal, gemmed  
With stars, a wonder to the immortals, wrought  
Of brass by the lame god. She found him there 465  
Sweating and toiling, and with busy hand  
Plying the bellows. He was fashioning  
Tripods, a score, to stand beside the wall  
Of his fair palace. All of these he placed  
On wheels of gold, that, of their own accord, 470  
They might roll in among the assembled gods,  
And then roll back, a marvel to behold.  
So far they all were finished ; but not yet  
Were added the neat handles, and for these  
The god was forging rivets busily. 475  
While thus he labored, with a mind intent  
Upon his skilful task, on silver feet

Came Thetis. Charis, of the snowy veil,  
The beautiful, whom the great god of fire,  
Vulcan, had made his wife, beheld, and came 480  
Forward to meet her, seized her hand, and said : —

“ O Thetis of the flowing robe, beloved  
And honored, what has brought thee to our home  
Thou dost not often visit us. Come in,  
That I may pay the honors due a guest.” 485

So the bright goddess spake, and led the way,  
And seated Thetis on a sumptuous throne,  
With silver studs divinely wrought, and placed  
A footstool, and called out to Vulcan thus :  
“ Come, Vulcan ; Thetis here hath need of thee.” 490

And the great artist, Vulcan, thus replied :  
“ Then of a truth a goddess is within  
Whom I must ever honor and revere ;  
Who from the danger of my terrible fall  
Saved me, what time my shameless mother sought  
To cast me from her sight, for I was lame. 495  
Then great had been my misery, had not  
Eurynomè and Thetis in their laps  
Received me as I fell, — Eurynomè,  
Daughter of billowy Ocean. There I dwelt 500  
Nine years, and many ornaments I wrought  
Of brass, — clasps, buckles, bracelets, necklaces, —  
Within a vaulted cave, round which the tides  
Of the vast ocean murmured and flung up  
Their foam ; nor any of the gods or men 505  
Knew of my hiding-place, save only they

Who saved me, Thetis and Eurynomè.  
And now, as she is with us, I must make  
To fair-haired Thetis some thank-offering  
For having rescued me. Haste, spread the board 520  
Amplly with generous fare, while I shall lay  
Aside my bellows and my implements."

He spake, and from his anvil-block arose  
A mighty bulk ; his weak legs under him,  
Halting, moved painfully. He laid apart  
His bellows from the fire, and gathered up  
The scattered implements with which he wrought,  
And locked them in a silver chest, and wiped  
With a moist sponge his face and both his hands,  
Stout neck and hairy chest. He then put on 525  
His tunic, took his massive regal wand  
Into his hand, and, tottering, sallied forth.  
Two golden statues, like in form and look  
To living maidens, aided with firm gait  
The monarch's steps. And mind was in their  
breasts, 525

And they had speech and strength, and from the gods  
Had learned becoming arts. Beside their lord  
They walked and tended him. As he drew near,  
Halting, to Thetis on the shining throne,  
He took the goddess by the hand and said :— 530

"What cause, O Thetis of the flowing robe,  
Honored and dear, has brought thee to our home?  
Not often com'st thou hither. Freely say  
Whatever lies upon thy mind. My heart

Commands me to obey, if it be aught  
That can be done and may be done by me.” 535

And Thetis answered, with a gush of tears :  
“ O Vulcan ! of the goddesses who dwell  
Upon Olympus, is there one who bears  
Such bitter sorrows as Saturnian Jove 540  
Inflicts on me, distressed above them all ?  
Me, of the ocean deities, he forced  
To take a mortal husband, — Peleus, son  
Of Æacus, — and to his bed I came  
Unwillingly. Within his palace-halls, 545  
Worn with a late old age, my husband lies  
Now I have other woes ; for when a son  
Was granted me, and I had brought him forth  
And reared him, flourishing like a young plant,  
A sapling in a fertile field, and great 550  
Among the heroes, — thus maturely trained,  
I sent him with his beakèd ships to Troy,  
To combat with her sons ; but never more  
Will it be mine to welcome him returned  
Home to the halls of Peleus. While to me 555  
He lives, and sees the sunshine, he endures  
Affliction, nor can I, though at his side,  
Aid him in aught. The maiden whom the Greeks  
Decreed him as his prize, the king of men,  
Atrides, took away, and grief for her 560  
Consumes his heart. The Trojans keep the Greeks  
Beleaguered by their ships, nor suffer them  
To pass beyond their gates. The elder chiefs

Implored him to relent, and offered him  
Large presents ; he refused to avert the doom 565  
That threatened them himself, but sent instead  
Patroclus to the war with his own arms,  
And with him sent much people. All the day  
They fought before the Scæan gates ; and then  
Had Ilium fallen, but that Apollo slew 570  
The brave son of Menœtius, who had caused  
Vast slaughter, — slew him fighting in the van  
Of war, and gave the glory of his death  
To Hector. Therefore I approach thy knees,  
And ask for him, my son, so soon to die, 575  
Buckler and helm, and beautiful greaves, shut close  
With clasps, and all the other arms complete,  
Which in the war my son's companion lost.  
For now Achilles lies upon the ground  
Bitterly grieving in his inmost soul." 580

And Vulcan, the great artist, answered her :  
" Be comforted, and take no further thought  
Of this ; for would I could as certainly  
Shield him from death's dread summons when his  
hour

Is come at last, as I shall have for him 585  
Beautiful armor ready to put on,  
And such as every man, of multitudes  
Who look on it hereafter, shall admire."

So speaking he withdrew, and went where lay  
The bellows, turned them toward the fire, and bade  
The work begin. From twenty bellows came 591

Their breath into the furnaces, — a blast  
Varied in strength as need might be ; for now  
They blew with violence for a hasty task,  
And then with gentler breath, as Vulcan pleased 595  
And as the work required. Upon the fire  
He laid impenetrable brass, and tin,  
And precious gold and silver ; on its block  
Placed the huge anvil, took the ponderous sledge,  
And held the pincers in the other hand. 600

And first he forged the huge and massive shield,  
Divinely wrought in every part, — its edge  
Clasped with a triple border, white and bright.  
A silver belt hung from it, and its folds  
Were five ; a crowd of figures on its disk 605  
Were fashioned by the artist's passing skill,  
For here he placed the earth and heaven, and here  
The great deep and the never-resting sun  
And the full moon, and here he set the stars  
That shine in the round heaven, — the Pleiades, 610  
The Hyades, Orion in his strength,  
And the Bear near him, called by some the Wain,  
That, wheeling, keeps Orion still in sight,  
Yet bathes not in the waters of the sea.

There placed he two fair cities full of men. 615  
In one were marriages and feasts ; they led  
The brides with flaming torches from their bowers,  
Along the streets, with many a nuptial song.  
There the young dancers whirled, and flutes and lyres  
Gave forth their sounds, and women at the doors 620

Stood and admired. Meanwhile a multitude  
Was in the forum, where a strife went on, —  
Two men contending for a fine, the price  
Of one who had been slain. Before the crowd  
One claimed that he had paid the fine, and one 625  
Denied that aught had been received, and both  
Called for the sentence which should end the strife.  
The people clamored for both sides, for both  
Had eager friends ; the heralds held the crowd  
In check ; the elders, upon polished stones, 630  
Sat in a sacred circle. Each one took,  
In turn, a herald's sceptre in his hand,  
And, rising, gave his sentence. In the midst  
Two talents lay in gold, to be the meed  
Of him whose juster judgment should prevail. 635

Around the other city sat two hosts  
In shining armor, bent to lay it waste,  
Unless the dwellers would divide their wealth, —  
All that their pleasant homes contained, — and yield  
The assailants half. As yet the citizens 640  
Had not complied, but secretly had planned  
An ambush. Their beloved wives meanwhile,  
And their young children, stood and watched the  
walls,

With aged men among them, while the youths  
Marched on, with Mars and Pallas at their head, 645  
Both wrought in gold, with golden garments on,  
Stately and large in form, and over all  
Conspicuous, in bright armor, as became

The gods ; the rest were of an humbler size.  
And when they reached the spot where they should lie  
In ambush, by a river's side, a place 651  
For watering herds, they sat them down, all armed  
In shining brass. Apart from all the rest  
They placed two sentries, on the watch to spy 654  
The approach of sheep and hornèd kine. Soon came  
The herds in sight ; two shepherds walked with them,  
Who, all unweeting of the evil nigh,  
Solaced their task with music from their reeds.  
The warriors saw and rushed on them, and took  
And drave away large prey of beeves, and flocks 660  
Of fair white sheep, whose keepers they had slain.  
When the besiegers in their council heard  
The sound of tumult at the watering-place,  
They sprang upon their nimble-footed steeds,  
And overtook the pillagers. Both bands 665  
Arrayed their ranks and fought beside the stream,  
And smote each other. There did Discord rage,  
And Tumult, and the great Destroyer, Fate.  
One wounded warrior she had seized alive,  
And one unwounded yet, and through the field 670  
Dragged by the foot another, dead. Her robe  
Was reddened o'er the shoulders with the blood  
From human veins. Like living men they ranged  
The battle-field, and dragged by turns the slain.  
There too he sculptured a broad fallow field 675  
Of soft rich mould, thrice ploughed, and over which  
Walked many a ploughman, guiding to and fro

His steers, and when on their return they reached  
The border of the field the master came  
To meet them, placing in the hands of each 684  
A goblet of rich wine. Then turned they back  
Along the furrows, diligent to reach  
Their distant end. All dark behind the plough  
The ridges lay, a marvel to the sight,  
Like real furrows, though engraved in gold. 685

There, too, the artist placed a field which lay  
Deep in ripe wheat. With sickles in their hands  
The laborers reaped it. Here the handfuls fell  
Upon the ground ; there binders tied them fast  
With bands, and made them sheaves. Three bind-  
ers went 690

Close to the reapers, and behind them boys,  
Bringing the gathered handfuls in their arms,  
Ministered to the binders. Staff in hand,  
The master stood among them by the side  
Of the ranged sheaves and silently rejoiced. 695  
Meanwhile the servants underneath an oak  
Prepared a feast apart ; they sacrificed  
A fatling ox and dressed it, while the maids  
Were kneading for the reapers the white meal.

A vineyard also on the shield he graved, 700  
Beautiful, all of gold, and heavily  
Laden with grapes. Black were the clusters all ;  
The vines were stayed on rows of silver stakes.  
He drew a blue trench round it, and a hedge  
Of tin. One only path there was by which 705

The vintagers could go to gather grapes.  
Young maids and striplings of a tender age  
Bore the sweet fruit in baskets. Midst them all,  
A youth from his shrill harp drew pleasant sounds,  
And sang with soft voice to the murmuring strings.  
They danced around him, beating with quick feet 711  
The ground, and sang and shouted joyously.

And there the artist wrought a herd of beeves,  
High-horned, and sculptured all in gold and tin.  
They issued lowing from their stalls to seek 715  
Their pasture, by a murmuring stream, that ran  
Rapidly through its reeds. Four herdsmen, graved  
In gold, were with the beeves, and nine fleet dogs  
Followed. Two lions, seizing on a bull  
Among the foremost cattle, dragged him off 720  
Fearfully bellowing ; hounds and herdsmen rushed  
To rescue him. The lions tore their prey,  
And lapped the entrails and the crimson blood.  
Vainly the shepherds pressed around and urged  
Their dogs, that shrank from fastening with their  
teeth 725

Upon the lions, but stood near and bayed.

There also did illustrious Vulcan grave  
A fair, broad pasture, in a pleasant glade,  
Full of white sheep, and stalls, and cottages,  
And many a shepherd's fold with sheltering roof. 730

And there illustrious Vulcan also wrought  
A dance, — a maze like that which Dædalus,  
In the broad realm of Gnossus once contrived

For fair-haired Ariadne. Blooming youths  
And lovely virgins, tripping to light airs, 735  
Held fast each other's wrists. The maidens wore  
Fine linen robes ; the youths had tunics on  
Lustrous as oil, and woven daintily.  
The maids wore wreaths of flowers ; the young men  
swords

Of gold in silver belts. They bounded now 740  
In a swift circle, — as a potter whirls  
With both his hands a wheel to try its speed,  
Sitting before it, — then again they crossed  
Each other, darting to their former place.  
A multitude around that joyous dance 745  
Gathered, and were amused, while from the crowd  
Two tumblers raised their song, and flung themselves  
About among the band that trod the dance.

Last on the border of that glorious shield  
He graved in all its strength the ocean-stream. 750

And when that huge and massive shield was done,  
He forged a corselet brighter than the blaze  
Of fire ; he forged a solid helm to fit  
The hero's temples, shapely and enchased  
With rare designs, and with a crest of gold. 755  
And last he forged him greaves of ductile tin.

When the great artist Vulcan saw his task  
Complete, he lifted all that armor up  
And laid it at the feet of her who bore  
Achilles. Like a falcon in her flight, 760  
Down plunging from Olympus capped with snow,  
She bore the shining armor Vulcan gave.

## BOOK XIX.

IN saffron-colored mantle from the tides  
Of Ocean rose the Morning to bring light  
To gods and men, when Thetis reached the fleet,  
Bringing the gift of Vulcan. There she found  
Her son, who, bending o'er Patroclus, wept 5  
Aloud, and all around a troop of friends  
Lamented bitterly. Beside him stood  
The glorious goddess, took his hand, and said :—

“Leave we the dead, my son, since it hath pleased  
The gods that he should fall ; and now receive 10  
This sumptuous armor, forged by Vulcan's hand,  
Beautiful, such as no man ever wore.”

The goddess spake, and laid the armor down  
Before Achilles ; as they touched the earth,  
The well-wrought pieces clanked, and terror seized  
The Myrmidons. No one among them all 16  
Dared fix his gaze upon them ; all shrank back.  
Achilles only, as he saw them, felt  
His spirit roused within him. In his eyes  
A terrible brightness flashed, as if of fire. 20  
He lifted up the god's magnificent gift  
Rejoicing, and, when long his eyes had dwelt  
Delighted on the marvellous workmanship,  
Thus to his mother said, in wingèd words :—

“A god indeed, my mother, must have given 25

These arms, the work of heavenly hands : no man  
Could forge them. Now I arm myself for war.  
But for the valiant Menœtiades  
I greatly fear that flies will gather round  
The wounds inflicted by the spear, and worms 30  
Be bred within them, to pollute the corpse  
Now that the life is gone, and taint the whole."

And silver-footed Thetis answered thus :  
"Son, have no care for that. The task be mine  
To drive away the importunate swarm that feed 35  
On heroes slain in battle. Though it lie  
The whole year long, the body shall remain  
Even more than uncorrupted. Call thou now  
To council all the Achaian chiefs ; renounce  
Thy feud with Agamemnon, king of men, 40  
And arm for war, and put on all thy might."

She spake, and called a fiery courage up  
Within the hero's breast. The goddess then  
Infused ambrosia and the ruddy juice  
Of nectar through the nostrils of the dead 45  
Into the frame, to keep it from decay.

Along the beach the great Achilles went,  
Calling with mighty shouts the Grecian chiefs.  
Then even they who till that day remained  
Beside the fleet, — the pilots and the men 50  
Who held the helm, the stewards of the ships,  
And the purveyors, — all made haste to swell  
The assembly, for they knew that he who long  
Had borne no part in the disastrous war

Had now come forth. Two ministers of Mars, 55  
 The brave Tydides and the nobly born  
 Ulysses, both supported by their spears,  
 Came halting, for their wounds were painful yet ;  
 They came and sat among the foremost chiefs.

And last came Agamemnon, king of men, 60  
 Wounded, for he had felt in thick of fight  
 The edge of the sharp spear which Coön bore,  
 Antenor's son. Now when the Greeks were all  
 Assembled, swift Achilles rose and said : —

“ Atrides, of a truth it would have been 65  
 Better for both of us had we done this  
 At first, though sorely angered, when we strove  
 For a girl's sake so fiercely. Would that she  
 Had perished in my ships, by Dian's shaft,  
 The day on which I laid Lyrnessus waste ! 70  
 So many Greeks would then have not been forced,  
 Slain by the enemy's hand, to bite the dust  
 Of the great earth, while I was brooding o'er  
 My wrath. All that was for the good of Troy  
 And Hector ; but the Greeks, I think, will long 75  
 Remember our contention. Let us leave  
 These things among the things that were, and,  
 though

They make us grieve, let us subdue our minds  
 To what the time requires. Here then my wrath  
 Shall end ; it is not meet that it should burn 80  
 Forever. Hasten thou and rouse to war  
 The long-haired Greeks, that I may yet again

Go forth among the men of Troy, and learn  
If they design to encamp another night  
Before the fleet. There is among them all 85  
No man, I ween, who will not joyfully  
Sit down when he escapes my deadly spear."

He ended, and the Achaïans all rejoiced  
To hear the brave Pelides thus renounce  
His anger. Agamemnon, king of men, 90  
Then rose. He came not forth into the midst,  
But stood beside his seat, and thus he spake :—

"O friends, Achaïan heroes, ministers  
Of Mars! Whoever rises up to speak  
'T is well to hear him through, and not break in 95  
Upon his speech, else is the most expert  
Confounded. Who amid a clamorous throng  
Can listen or can speak? The orator  
Of clearest voice must utter it in vain.  
Now I address Pelides ; for the rest, 100  
Hearken ye all, and ponder what I say.  
The Greeks speak often of this feud, and cast  
The blame on me. Yet was I not the cause,  
But Jupiter and Fate, and she who walks  
In darkness, dread Erynnis. It was they 105  
Who filled my mind with fury in the hour  
When from Achilles I bore off his prize.  
What could I do? A deity prevails  
In all things, Atè, mighty to destroy,  
Daughter of Jove, and held in awe by all. 110  
Delicate are her feet ; she never comes

Near to the ground, but glides above the heads  
Of men, to do them harm, and in her net  
Entangles one at least of two who strive.  
Jove, deemed the mightiest among men and gods, 115  
Once felt her power of mischief. Him his spouse,  
Juno, entrapped by cunning, when within  
The massive walls of Thebes Alcmena lay  
In childbed, and the mighty Hercules  
Was near his birth. For Jupiter had said 120  
Boastfully to the immortals : ‘Hear, ye gods  
And goddesses, what I am moved to speak :  
This day shall Ilithyia, who presides  
At births, bring into light a prince whose rule  
The neighboring tribes shall own ; he shall be one  
Who bears the blood of my illustrious race.’ 125

“Imperial Juno thus, with words of guile,  
Made answer : ‘What thou sayest will prove false,  
Nor wilt thou keep thy word. Now swear to me,  
Olympius, with the irrevocable oath, 130  
That whosoever of thy race shall fall  
This day between a woman’s feet shall bear  
The rule o’er all the neighboring tribes.’ She spake,  
And Jove, perceiving not her craft, complied,  
And took the mighty oath, but afterward 135  
Found himself wronged. For Juno, darting forth,  
Shot from the Olympian summit, and at once  
Alighted at Achaian Argos. There  
She found the noble wife of Sthenelus,  
The son of Perseus, pregnant with a son, 140

In the seventh month. She caused him to be born,  
The number of his months yet incomplete,  
And kept Alcmena's hour of childbirth back,  
And stayed her pangs. The goddess then made  
haste

To bear the tidings to Saturnian Jove.

145

“O Father Jupiter, by whom are hurled  
The ruddy lightnings, I have news for thee.  
A man-child of a generous stock is born, —  
Eurystheus, whom the Argives shall obey, —  
Born at this hour to Sthenelus, the son  
Of Perseus, who is thine. And well it is  
That such a prince should rule the Argive race.

150

“She ended : Jupiter was deeply grieved,  
And, seizing Atè by her shining locks,  
In his great wrath, he swore a mighty oath, —  
That Atè, whose delight it is to bring  
Mischief to all, should never tread again  
Olympus and the starry floor of heaven.  
Thus having sworn, he swung her, with raised arm,  
On high, and hurled her from the starry heaven  
Downward, where soon she reached the haunts of  
men ;

155

160

Yet oft in after time because of her  
He sighed, beholding his beloved son  
Doomed by Eurystheus to unworthy tasks.  
So I, while crested Hector in his might  
Made havoc at our fleet among the Greeks  
Even by their prowess, remembered well my fault.

165

And now since I have borne the penalty,  
And Jupiter it was who took away  
My reason, I would gladly make amends 170  
With liberal gifts. But rise and join the war ;  
Inflame the courage of the rest ; the gifts  
Will I supply, — all that were promised thee  
When nobly born Ulysses yesterday  
Went to thy tents. Or, if it please thee, wait, 175  
Though armed for battle, and my train shall bring  
The treasures from my ship, that thou mayst see  
My presents are peace-offerings indeed.”

The swift of foot, Achilles, answered thus :  
“ Most glorious son of Atreus, king of men ! 180  
Whether, O Agamemnon, thou wilt give  
Gifts, as is meet, or keep them, rests with thee.  
Now let us think of war ; it is not well  
To waste the hour in talking, and put off  
The mighty work that we have yet to do. 185  
Let every Greek among you, as he sees  
Achilles fighting in the foremost ranks,  
And slaughtering the Trojan phalanxes,  
Take heart and boldly combat with his man.”

And then Ulysses, wise in council, spake, 190  
Answering Achilles : “ Nay, thou shouldst not thus,  
Brave as thou art, lead on the sons of Greece,  
Yet fasting, to the conflict with the men  
Of Troy beside their city. No brief space  
The struggle will endure when once the foes 195  
Rush on each other, and a god inspires

Both hosts with fury. Bid the Achaians take  
In their swift galleys food and wine ; in these  
Are force and vigor. No man can endure  
To combat all the day till set of sun, 200  
Save with the aid of food, however great  
The promptings of his valor ; for his limbs  
Grow heavy, thirst and hunger weaken him,  
And his knees fail him as he walks. Not so  
The warrior well supplied with food and wine : 205  
He fights the foe all day ; a resolute heart  
Is in his bosom ; nor does weariness  
O'ertake him till all others leave the field.  
Now let the people be dismissed awhile,  
And a repast be ordered. Let the king, 210  
Atrides, bring into the assembly here  
His gifts, that all the Greeks may look on them,  
And thou rejoice to see them. Let him rise  
Among the Greeks, and take a solemn oath  
That he has ne'er approached the maiden's bed 215  
To claim a husband's right. Thus let thy heart  
Be satisfied. Yet let the monarch spread  
A sumptuous banquet in his tent for thee,  
That thy redress may be complete. And thou,  
Atrides, wilt hereafter be more just 220  
To others. It dishonors not a king  
To make amends to one whom he has wronged."

And then King Agamemnon spake in turn :  
"Son of Laertes, gladly have I heard  
What thou hast said, and well hast thou discoursed

Of all things in their order. I will take 226  
The oath of which thou speakest, — so my heart  
Commands me. In the presence of a god  
I take it, and commit no perjury.

Now let Achilles, though he longs for war, 230  
Delay awhile ; and all assembled here,  
Remain ye on the ground till from my ship  
The gifts are brought. This charge and this command

I give to thee, Ulysses. Take with thee  
A band of youths, the noblest of the host, 235  
And bring the presents promised yesterday  
To Peleus' son, and hither let them lead  
The women. Meantime let Talthylus haste  
To bring from our broad camp a boar, which I  
Will offer up to Jove and to the Sun." 240

The swift of foot, Achilles, thus replied :  
" Most glorious son of Atreus, king of men,  
These things are for the time when there shall come  
A pause from battle, and this warlike heat  
Within my breast shall cool. They whom the spear  
Of Hector, son of Priam, has o'ercome 246  
Lie mangled on the earth, since Jupiter  
Awarded him the glory of the day : —  
And ye propose a banquet. I would call  
The sons of Greece to rush into the war 250  
Unfed and fasting, and when this disgrace  
Shall be avenged, I would, at sunset, spread  
A liberal feast. Be sure that I, till then,

Taste neither food nor drink, while my slain friend  
Lies gashed with weapons in my tent, amidst 255  
His sorrowing comrades. Little I regard  
The things of which thou speakest, for my thoughts  
Are all of bloodshed and of dying groans."

Ulysses, the sagacious, thus rejoined :  
"Achilles, son of Peleus, bravest far 260  
Of all the Achaians, mightier with the spear  
By no small odds than I, yet do I stand  
In prudence much above thee ; I have lived  
More years, and more have learned. Let then thy  
mind

Accept what I shall say. Men soon become 265  
Weary of warfare, even when the sword  
Lays its most ample harvest on the earth.  
But fewer sheaves are reaped when Jupiter,  
The arbiter of battles, turns the scale.  
It is not well that we of Greece should mourn 270  
The dead with fasting, since from day to day  
Our warriors fall in numbers. Where were then  
Respite from daily fasts? Lay we our slain  
In earth and mourn a day. We who outlive  
The cruel combat should refresh ourselves 275  
With food and wine, that we may steadily  
Maintain in arms the conflict with the foe.  
And then let no man idly wait to hear  
A further call to war, — for it will come  
Freighted with evil to the man who skulks 280  
Among the ships, — but let us all go forth

To wage fierce battle with the knights of Troy."

He spake, and summoned to his side the sons  
Of glorious Nestor, and Meriones,  
And Meges, son of Phyleus, and with them 285  
Thoas, and Lycomedes, Creon's son,  
And Melanippus. Straight they took their way  
To Agamemnon's tent, and there their task  
Was done as quickly as the word was given. 289  
They brought seven tripods forth, the promised gifts,  
And twenty burnished caldrons, and twelve steeds,  
And led away seven graceful women trained  
In household arts, — the maid with rosy cheeks,  
Briseis, was the eighth. Ulysses came,  
Leading the way, and bearing, duly weighed, 295  
Ten talents, all of gold. The Achaian youths  
Followed, and placed the presents in the midst  
Of that assembly. Agamemnon rose ;  
And then Talthybius, who was like a god  
In power of voice, came near and took his place 300  
Beside the monarch, holding in his hands  
A boar. The son of Atreus drew a knife,  
Which hung by the great scabbard of his sword,  
And, cutting off the forelock of the boar,  
Prayed with uplifted hands to Jupiter : 305  
Meantime the Greeks in silence kept their seats,  
And, as became them, listened to the king,  
Who looked into the sky above, and said : —

"Now first bear witness, Jove, of all the gods  
Greatest and best, and also Earth and Sun, 310

And Furies dwelling under Earth, who take  
Vengeance on men forsworn, that never I  
Have laid, for purpose of unchaste desire,  
Or other cause, my hand upon the maid  
Briseis. She hath dwelt inviolate 325  
Within my tents. If yet in aught I say  
Lurk perjury, then may the blessed gods  
Heap on my head the many miseries  
With which they punish those who falsely swear !”

He spake, and drew the unrelenting blade 320  
Across the animal's throat. Talthybius took  
And swung the carcass round, and cast it forth  
Into the gray sea's depths, to be the food  
Of fishes. Then again Achilles rose  
Among the warlike sons of Greece, and said : — 325

“Great sorrows thou dost send, O Father Jove !  
Upon mankind ; for never would the son  
Of Atreus have provoked the wrath that burned  
Within my bosom, never would have thought  
To bear away the maiden from my tent 330  
In spite of me, had it not been the will  
Of Jupiter that many a Greek should die.  
But banquet now, and then prepare for war.”

So spake Achilles, and at once dissolved  
The assembly, each repairing to his ship 335  
Save the large-hearted Myrmidons, who still  
Were busy with the gifts, and carried them  
Toward their great general's galley. These they laid  
Carefully in the tents, and seated there

The women, while the attentive followers drave 340  
The coursers to the stables. When the maid  
Briseis, beautiful as Venus, saw  
Patroclus lying gashed with wounds, she sprang  
And threw herself upon the dead, and tore  
Her bosom, her fair cheeks and delicate neck ; 345  
And thus the graceful maiden, weeping, said :—

“ Patroclus, dear to my unhappy heart !  
I left thee in full life, when from this tent  
They led me ; I return and find thee dead,  
O chieftain of the people ! Thus it is 350  
That sorrow upon sorrow is my lot.  
Him to whose arms my father, in my youth,  
And gracious mother gave me as a bride,  
I saw before our city pierced and slain,  
And the three brothers whom my mother bore 355  
Slain also, — brothers whom I dearly loved.  
Yet thou, when swift Achilles struck to earth  
My hapless husband, and laid waste the town  
Of godlike Mynes, wouldst not suffer me  
To weep despairingly ; for thou didst give 360  
Thy word to make me yet the wedded wife  
Of great Achilles, bear me in the fleet  
To Phthia, and prepare the wedding feast  
Among the Myrmidons. O ever kind !  
I mourn thy death, and cannot be consoled.” 365

Weeping she spake ; the women wept with her  
Seemingly for the dead, but each, in truth,  
For her own griefs. Meanwhile the elders came.

Around Achilles, praying him to join  
The banquet, but the chief, with sighs, refused. 370

“Dear comrades, if ye love me, do not thus  
Press me to sit and feast. A mighty woe  
Weighs down my spirit ; it is my resolve  
To wait and bear until the setting sun.”

So saying, he dismissed the other kings. 375  
The sons of Atreus, and the high-born chief  
Ulysses, Nestor, and Idomeneus,  
And Phœnix, aged knight, alone remained,  
And anxiously they sought to comfort him  
In his great grief ; but comfort would he none 380  
Ere entering the red jaws of war. He drew  
Deep sighs, and, thinking on Patroclus, spake :

“The time has been when thou too, hapless one,  
Dearest of all my comrades, wouldst have spread  
With diligent speed before me in my tent 385  
A genial banquet, while the Greeks prepared  
For desperate battle with the knights of Troy.  
Thou liest now a mangled corse, and I,  
Through grief for thee, refrain from food and drink,  
Though they are near. No worse calamity 390  
Could light on me, not even should I hear  
News of my father’s death, who haply now  
Tenderly mourns with tears his absent son  
In Phthia, while upon a foreign coast  
I wage for hated Helen’s sake the war 395  
Against the Trojans ; or were I to hear  
Tidings that my beloved son had died,

The noble Neoptolemus, who now,  
 If living, is in Scyros, growing up  
 To manhood. Once the hope was in my heart 400  
 That I alone should perish here at Troy,  
 Far from the Argive pastures full of steeds,  
 And thou return to Phthia and bring home  
 My son from Scyros in thy ship, and show  
 The youth my wealth, my servants, and my halls, 405  
 High-roofed and spacious. For my mind misgives  
 That Peleus either lives not, or endures  
 A painful age, and hardly lives, yet waits  
 To hear the sorrowful news that I am slain."

So spake he weeping, and the elders sighed 410  
 To see his tears, as each recalled to mind  
 Those whom he left at home, while Saturn's son  
 Beheld their grief with pity, and bespake  
 His daughter Pallas thus with wingèd words:—

"My child, wilt thou desert that valiant man? 415  
 And shall Achilles be no more thy care?  
 Lo, by his ships, before their lofty prows,  
 He sits, lamenting his beloved friend.  
 The rest are at the banquet; he remains  
 Apart from them, and fasting. Hasten thou; 420  
 With nectar and ambrosial sweets refresh  
 His frame, that hunger overtake him not."

As thus he spake he sent the goddess forth  
 Eager to do her errand. Plunging down,  
 In form a shrill-voiced harpy with broad wings, 425  
 She cleft the air. The Greeks throughout the camp

Were putting on their armor. She infused  
Into the hero's frame ambrosial sweets  
And nectar, that his limbs might not grow faint  
With hunger. Then the goddess sought again 430  
The stable mansion of Almighty Jove,  
While all the Greeks came pouring from the fleet.

As when the flakes of snow fall thick from heaven,  
Driven by the north wind sweeping on the clouds  
Before it, so from out the galleys came 435  
Helms crowding upon helms that glittered fair,  
Strong hauberks, bossy shields, and ashen spears.  
The gleam of armor brightened heaven and earth,  
And mighty was the sound of trampling feet.  
Amidst them all the great Achilles stood, 440  
Putting his armor on ; he gnashed his teeth ;  
His eyes shot fire ; a grief too sharp to bear  
Was in his heart, as, filled with rage against  
The men of Troy, he cased his limbs in mail,  
The gift of Vulcan, from whose diligent hand 445  
It came. And first about his legs he clasped  
The beautiful greaves, with silver fastenings,  
Fitted the corselet to his bosom next,  
And from his shoulders hung the brazen sword  
With silver studs, and then he took the shield, 450  
Massive and broad, whose brightness streamed as  
far

As the moon's rays. And as at sea the light  
Of beacon, blazing in some lonely spot  
By night, upon a mountain summit, shines

To mariners whom the tempest's force has driven 455  
Far from their friends across the fishy deep,  
So from that glorious buckler of the son  
Of Peleus, nobly wrought, a radiance streamed  
Into the sky. And then he raised and placed  
Upon his head the impenetrable helm 460  
With horse-hair plume. It glittered like a star,  
And all the shining tufts of golden thread,  
With which the maker's hand had thickly set  
Its cone, were shaken. Next the high-born chief  
Tried his new arms, to know if they were well 465  
Adjusted to his shape, and left his limbs  
Free play. They seemed like wings, and lifted up  
The shepherd of the people. Then he drew  
From its ancestral sheath his father's spear,  
Heavy and huge and tough. No man of all 470  
The Grecian host could wield that weapon save  
Achilles only. 'T was a Pelian ash,  
Which Chiron for his father had cut down  
On Pelion's highest peak, to be the death  
Of heroes. Meantime, busy with the steeds, 475  
Automedon and Alcimus put on  
Their trappings and their yoke, and round their  
necks  
Bound the fair collars, thrust into their mouths  
The bit, and backward drew the reins to meet  
The well-wrought chariot. Then Automedon 480  
Took in his hand the showy lash, and leaped  
Into the seat. Behind him, all equipped

For war, Achilles mounted, in a blaze  
 Of arms that dazzled like the sun, and thus  
 Called to his father's steeds with terrible voice : —

“Xanthus and Balius, whom Podargè bore, — 486  
 A noble stock, — I charge you to bring back  
 Into the Grecian camp, the battle done,  
 Him whom ye now are bearing to the field,  
 Nor leave him, as ye left Patroclus, dead.” 490

Swift-footed Xanthus from beneath the yoke  
 Answered him with bowed head and drooping mane  
 That, flowing through the yoke-ring swept the  
 ground, —

For Juno gave him then the power of speech : —

“For this one day, at least, we bear thee safe, 495  
 O fiery chief, Achilles ! but the hour  
 Of death draws nigh to thee, nor will the blame  
 Be ours ; a mighty god and cruel fate  
 Ordain it. Not through our neglect or sloth  
 Did they of Troy strip off thy glorious arms 500  
 From slain Patroclus. That invincible god,  
 The son of golden-haired Latona, smote  
 The hero in the foremost ranks, and gave  
 Glory to Hector. Even though our speed  
 Were that of Zephyr, fleetest of the winds, 505  
 Yet certain is thy doom to be o'ercome  
 In battle by a god and by a man.”

Thus far he spake, and then the Furies checked  
 His further speech. Achilles, swift of foot,  
 Replied in anger : “Xanthus, why foretell 510

My death? It is not needed ; well I know  
 My fate, — that here I perish, far away  
 From Peleus and my mother. I shall fight  
 Till I have made the Trojans sick of war."

He spake, and, shouting to his firm-paced steeds,  
 Drave them, among the foremost, toward the war. 516

## BOOK XX.

THUS, O Pelides, did the sons of Greece,  
 Impatient for the battle, arm themselves,  
 By their beaked ships, around thee. Opposite,  
 Upon a height that rose amidst the plain,  
 The Trojans waited. Meantime Jupiter  
 Sent Themis from the Olympian summit, ploughed  
 With dells, to summon all the immortal ones  
 To council. Forth she went from place to place,  
 Bidding them to the palace halls of Jove.  
 Then none of all the Rivers failed to join 10  
 The assembly, save Oceanus, and none  
 Of all the Nymphs were absent whose abode  
 Is in the pleasant groves and river-founts  
 And grassy meadows. When they reached the halls  
 Of cloud-compelling Jove they sat them down 15  
 On shining thrones, divided each from each  
 By polished columns, wrought for Father Jove  
 By Vulcan's skill. Thus all to Jove's abode

Were gathered. Neptune had not disobeyed  
The call. He left the sea, and took his seat 20  
Among them, and inquired the will of Jove.

“Why, wielder of the lightning, dost thou call  
The gods again to council? Do thy plans  
Concern the Greeks and Trojans? For the war  
Between their hosts will be rekindled soon.” 25

And thus the Cloud-compeller Jove replied :  
“Thou who dost shake the shores, thou knowest  
well

The purpose of my mind, and for whose sake  
I call this council. Though so soon to die,  
They are my care. Yet will I keep my place, 30  
Seated upon the Olympian mount, and look  
Calmly upon the conflict. All of you  
Depart, and aid the Trojans or the Greeks,  
As it may list you. For should Peleus’ son  
Alone do battle with the men of Troy, 35  
Their squadrons could not stand before the assault  
Of the swift-footed warrior for an hour.  
Beforetime, at the sight of him they fled,  
O’ercome with fear, and now, when he is roused  
To rage by his companion’s death, I fear 40  
Lest, though it be against the will of fate,  
He level with the ground the walls of Troy.”

Saturnius spake, and moved the hosts to join  
In desperate conflict. All the gods went forth  
To mingle with the war on different sides. 45  
Juno and Pallas hastened to the fleet

With Neptune, he who makes the earth to shake,  
And Hermes, god of useful arts, and shrewd  
In forecast. Vulcan also went with them,  
Strong and stern-eyed, yet lame, his feeble legs 50  
Moving with labor. To the Trojan side  
Went crested Mars, Apollo with his locks  
Unshorn, Diana mighty with the bow,  
Latona, Xanthus, and the Queen of smiles,  
Venus ; for while the gods remained apart 55  
From men, the Achaian host was high in hope  
Because Achilles, who so long had left  
The war, now reappeared upon the field,  
And terror shook the limbs of every son  
Of Troy when he beheld the swift of foot, 60  
Pelides, terrible as Mars — that curse  
Of human-kind — in glittering arms again.  
But when the dwellers of Olympus joined  
The crowd of mortals, Discord, who makes mad  
The nations, rose and raged ; Minerva raised 65  
Her war-cry from the trench without the wall,  
And then she shouted from the sounding shore ;  
While, like a cloudy whirlwind, opposite,  
Moved Mars, and fiercely yelled, encouraging  
The men of Troy, as on the city heights 70  
He stood, or paced with rapid steps the hill  
Beside the Simoïs, called the Beautiful.

Thus, kindling hate between the hosts, the gods  
Engaged, and hideous was the strife that rose  
Among them. From above, with terrible crash, 75

Thundered the father of the blessed gods  
And mortal men, while Neptune from below  
Shook the great earth and lofty mountain peaks.  
Then watery Ida's heights and very roots,  
The city of Troy, and the Greek galleys, quaked. 80  
Then Pluto, ruler of the nether world,  
Leaped from his throne in terror, lest the god  
Who makes the earth to tremble, cleaving it  
Above him, should lay bare to gods and men  
His horrible abodes, the dismal haunts 85  
Which even the gods abhor. Such tumult filled  
The field of battle when the immortals joined  
The conflict. Then against King Neptune stood  
Phœbus Apollo, with his wingèd shafts,  
And Pallas, goddess of the azure eyes, 90  
Confronted Mars. Encountering Juno came  
The sister of Apollo, archer-queen  
And huntress, Dian of the golden bow.  
The helpful Hermes, god of useful arts,  
Opposed Latona, and the mighty stream 95  
Called Xanthus by the immortals, but by men  
Scamander, with his eddies strong and deep,  
Stood face to face with Vulcan in the field.

So warred the gods with gods. Meantime the son  
Of Peleus, ranging through the thick of fight, 100  
Sought only Hector, Priam's son, whose blood  
He meant to pour to greedy Mars, the god  
Of carnage. But Apollo, who impels  
Warriors to battle, stirred Æneas up

To meet Pelides. First he filled his heart 105  
With resolute valor, and then took the voice  
Of Priam's son, Lycaon. In his shape  
Thus spake Apollo, son of Jupiter :—

“Æneas, prince of Troy, where now are all  
The boasts which thou hast made before the chiefs  
Of Troy at banquets, that thou yet wouldst meet 111  
Pelides in the combat hand to hand?”

Æneas made reply : “Priamides,  
Why dost thou bid me, when thou knowest me  
Unwilling, meet in combat Peleus' son, 115  
The mighty among men? It will not be  
For the first time if I confront him now.  
He chased me once from Ida with his spear, —  
Me and my fellows, when he took our herds  
And laid Lyrnessus waste and Pedasus. 120  
But Jove, who gave me strength and nimble feet,  
Preserved me ; I had else been slain by him  
And by Minerva, for the goddess went  
Before him, giving him the victory  
And moving him to slay the Leleges 125  
And Trojans with the brazen spear he bore.  
'T is not for mortal man to fight the son  
Of Peleus, at whose side there ever stands  
One of the immortal gods, averting harm.  
And then his weapon flies right on, nor stops 130  
Until it bites the flesh. Yet were the god  
To weigh the victory in an equal scale,  
Achilles would not vanquish me with ease,

Though he might boast his frame were all of brass.”

Then spake the king Apollo, son of Jove : 135

“ Pray, warrior, to the eternal gods. They say  
That Venus gave thee birth, who has her own  
From Jove. His mother is of lower rank  
Than thine. Thine is a child of Jove, but his  
A daughter of the Ancient of the Deep. 140  
Strike at him with that conquering spear of thine,  
Nor let him scare thee with stern words and threats.”

He said, and breathed into the prince’s breast  
Fresh valor, as, arrayed in glittering arms,  
He pressed to where the foremost warriors fought ;  
Yet not unseen by Juno’s eye went forth 146  
The son of old Anchises. She convened  
The gods in council, and addressed them thus :—

“ Neptune and Pallas, what shall now be done ?  
Consider ye. Æneas, all arrayed 150  
In glittering arms, is pressing on to meet  
Pelides. Phœbus sends him. Let us join  
To turn him back, or let some one of us  
Stand near Achilles, fill his limbs with strength,  
Nor let his heart grow faint, but let him see 155  
That we, the mightiest of the immortals, look  
On him with favor, and that those who strive  
Amid the war and bloodshed to protect  
The sons of Troy are empty boasters all.  
For this we came from heaven to interpose 160  
In battle, that Achilles may endure  
No harm from Trojan hands, although, no doubt,

Hereafter he must suffer all that Fate  
Spun for him when his mother brought him forth.  
But if he hear not, from some heavenly voice, 165  
Of this assurance, fear may fall on him  
When, haply, in the battle he shall meet  
Some god ; for when revealed to human sight  
The presence of the gods is terrible."

And then did Neptune, he who shakes the earth,  
Make answer : " Juno, it becomes thee ill 171  
To be so greatly vexed. I cannot wish  
A contest with the other gods, though we  
In power excel them. Rather let us sit  
Apart, where we can look upon the war, 175  
And leave it to mankind. And yet if Mars  
Or Phœbus should begin the fight, or seek  
To thwart Achilles or restrain his arm,  
There will be cause for us to join the strife  
In earnest, and I deem that they full soon, 180  
The contest ended, will return to join  
The assembled gods upon the Olympian mount,  
Forced to withdraw by our all-potent hands."

So spake the dark-haired god, and led the way  
To the high mound of godlike Hercules, 185  
Raised from the earth by Trojans, with the aid  
Of Pallas, that the hero there might find  
A refuge when the monster of the deep  
Should chase him from the sea-beach to the plain.  
With other gods beside him Neptune there 190  
Sat down and drew a shadow, which no sight

Could pierce, around their shoulders. Other gods,  
Upon the hill called Beautiful, were grouped  
Round thee, Apollo, archer-god, and Mars,  
Spoiler of cities. On both sides they sat, 195  
Devising plans, unwilling to begin  
The fierce encounter, though Almighty Jove  
From where he sat in heaven commanded it.

The warriors thronged into the field, which shone  
With brazen armor and caparisons 200  
Of steeds ; earth trembled with the sounding tramp  
Of marching squadrons. From the opposing ranks  
Two chieftains, each the bravest of his host,  
Impatient to engage, — Anchises' son,  
Æneas, and the great Achilles, — came. 205  
And first Æneas, with defiant mien  
And nodding casque, stood forth. He held his shield  
Before him, which he wielded right and left,  
And shook his brazen spear. On the other side,  
Pelides hurried toward him, terrible 210  
As is a lion, which the assembled hinds  
Of a whole village chase and seek to slay,  
While on he stalks, contemning their assault ;  
But if the arrow of some strong-armed youth  
Have smitten him, he stands, and gathers all 215  
His strength to spring, with open jaws and teeth  
Half hid in foam, and uttering fearful growls  
From his deep chest ; he lashes with his tail  
His sides and sinewy thighs to rouse himself  
To combat, and then, grimly frowning, leaps 220

To slay, or by the foremost youths be slain,  
 So sprang Achilles, moved by his bold heart  
 To meet the brave Æneas. As the twain  
 Drew near each other, the swift-footed chief,  
 The great Achilles, was the first to speak :— 225

“Why, O Æneas, hast thou come so far  
 Through this vast crowd to seek me? Does thy  
     heart

Bid thee confront me in the hope to gain  
 The place which Priam holds, and to bear rule  
 Over the knights of Troy? Yet shouldst thou take  
 My life, think not that Priam in thy hand 231  
 Will place such large reward. He has his sons,  
 Nor is he fickle, but of stable mind.  
 Or will the Trojans, if thou slayest me,  
 Bestow on thee broad acres, of a soil 235  
 Fruitful exceedingly, and suited well  
 To vines or to the plough, which thou mayst till  
 That also, as I hope, thou wilt obtain  
 With difficulty ; for, unless I err,  
 I forced thee once to flee before my spear. 240  
 Dost thou remember, when thou wert alone  
 Among thy beeves, I drave thee, running fast,  
 Down Ida’s steeps? Then didst thou never turn  
 To face me, but didst seek a hiding-place  
 Within Lyrnessus, which I also took 245  
 And wasted, with the aid of Father Jove  
 And Pallas. From the town I led away  
 The women, never to be free again.

Jove and the other gods protected thee  
 That day. Yet will they not protect thee now, 250  
 As thou dost vainly hope. Withstand me not,  
 I counsel thee, but hide thyself among  
 The crowd before thou suffer harm, for he  
 Who sees past evils only is a fool."

And then Æneas answered : "Do not think, 255  
 Pelides, with such words to frighten me,  
 As if I were a beardless boy. I too  
 Might use reproach and taunt ; but well we know  
 Each other's birth and lineage, through report  
 Of men, although by sight I know not thine, ' 260  
 Nor know'st thou mine. They say that thou art  
 sprung

From Peleus the renowned, and from the nymph  
 Of ocean, fair-haired Thetis, while I boast  
 My birth from brave Anchises, and can claim  
 Venus as mother. Two of these to-day 265  
 Must weep the death of a beloved son,  
 For we are not to part, I think, nor end  
 The combat after a few childish words ;  
 Yet let me speak, that thou mayst better know  
 Our lineage, known already far and wide. 270  
 Jove was the father, cloud-compelling Jove,  
 Of Dardanus, by whom Dardania first  
 Was peopled, ere our sacred Troy was built  
 On the great plain, — a populous town ; for men  
 Dwelt still upon the roots of Ida fresh 275  
 With many springs. To Dardanus was born

King Erichthonius, richest in his day  
Of mortal men, and in his meadows grazed  
Three thousand mares, exulting in their brood  
Of tender foals. Of some of this vast herd 280  
Boreas became enamored as they fed.  
He came to them in likeness of a steed  
That wore an azure mane, and they brought forth  
Twelve foals, which all were females, of such speed  
That when they frolicked on the teeming earth 285  
They flew along the topmost ears of wheat  
And broke them not, and when they sported o'er  
The mighty bosom of the deep they ran  
Along the hoary summits of its waves.  
To Erichthonius Tros was born, who ruled 290  
The Trojans, and from Tros there sprang three sons  
Of high renown, — Ilus, Assaracus,  
And godlike Ganymede, most beautiful  
Of men ; the gods beheld and caught him up  
To heaven, so beautiful was he, to pour 295  
The wine to Jove, and ever dwell with them.  
And Ilus had a son, Laomedon,  
Of mighty fame, to whom five sons were born,  
Tithonus, Priam, Lampus, Clytius,  
And Hicetaon, trained to war by Mars. 300  
Assaracus begat my ancestor,  
Capys, to whom Anchises owes his birth.  
Anchises is my father ; Priam's son  
Is noble Hector. Such I claim to be  
My lineage and my blood ; but Jove at will 305

Gives in large measure, or diminishes,  
Men's warlike prowess ; and the power of Jove  
Is over all. But let us talk no more  
Of things like these, as if we were but boys,  
While here in the mid-field we stand between 310  
The warring armies. Both of us might cast  
Reproaches at each other, many and foul,  
Such as no galley of a hundred oars  
Could bear and float. Men's tongues are voluble,  
And endless are the modes of speech, and far 315  
Extends from side to side the field of words.  
Such as thou utterest it will be thy lot  
To hear from others. But what profits it  
For us to rail and wrangle, in high brawl,  
Like women angered to the quick, that rush 320  
Into the middle of the street and scold  
With furious words, some true and others false,  
As rage may prompt them ? Me thou shalt not move  
With words from my firm purpose ere thou raise  
Thy arm against me. Let us hasten first 325  
To prove the temper of our brazen spears."

He spake, and hurled his brazen spear to smite  
The dreadful shield, a terror in men's eyes ;  
That mighty buckler rang with the strong blow.  
Achilles, as it came, held forth his shield 330  
With nervous arm far from him, for he feared  
That the long javelin of his valiant foe  
Might pierce it. Idle fear ; he had not thought  
That the bright armor given him by the gods

Not easily would yield to force of man. 335  
Nor could the rapid spear that left the hand  
Of brave Æneas pierce the shield ; the gold,  
The gift of Vulcan, stopped it. Through two folds  
It went, but three remained ; for Vulcan's skill  
Fenced with five folds the disk, — the outer two 340  
Of brass, the inner two of tin ; between  
Was one of gold, and there the brazen spear  
Was stayed. And then in turn Achilles threw  
His ponderous spear, and struck the orbèd shield  
Borne by Æneas near the upper edge, 345  
Where thinnest was the brass and thinnest lay  
The bullock's hide. The Pelian ash broke through ;  
The buckler crashed ; Æneas, stooping low,  
Held it above him, terrified ; the spear,  
Tearing both plate and hide of that huge shield, 350  
Passed over him, and, eager to go on,  
Plunged in the earth and stood. He, when he saw  
The massive lance which he had just escaped  
Fixed in the earth so near him, stood awhile  
As struck with fear, and with despairing looks. 355  
Achilles drew his trenchant sword and rushed  
With fury on Æneas, uttering  
A fearful shout. Æneas lifted up  
A stone, a mighty weight, which no two men,  
As men are now, could raise, yet easily 360  
He wielded it. Æneas then, to save  
His threatened life, had smitten with the stone  
His adversary's buckler or his helm,

And with his sword Pelides had laid dead  
The Trojan, had not he who shakes the earth, 365  
Neptune, beheld him in that perilous hour,  
And instantly addressed the immortal gods :—

“ My heart, ye gods, is heavy for the sake  
Of the great-souled Æneas, who will sink  
To Hades overcome by Peleus’ son. 370

Rash man ! he listened to the archer-god  
Apollo, who has now no power to save  
The chief from death. But, guiltless as he is,  
Why should he suffer evil for the wrong  
Of others ? He has always sought to please 375

With welcome offerings the gods who dwell  
In the broad heaven. Let us withdraw him, then,  
From this great peril, lest, if he should fall  
Before Achilles, haply Saturn’s son  
May be displeased. And ’t is the will of fate 380

That he escape ; that so the Dardan race,  
Beloved by Jove above all others sprung  
From him and mortal women, may not yet  
Perish from earth and leave no progeny.  
For Saturn’s son already holds the house 385  
Of Priam in disfavor, and will make

Æneas ruler o’er the men of Troy,  
And his sons’ sons shall rule them after him.”

Imperial Juno with large eyes replied :  
“ Determine, Neptune, for thyself, and save 390  
Æneas, or, all blameless as he is,  
Abandon him to perish by the hand

Of Peleus' son, Achilles. We have sworn —  
 Minerva and myself — that never we  
 Would aid in aught the Trojans to escape 395  
 Their day of ruin, though the town of Troy  
 Sink to the dust in the destroying flames, —  
 Flames kindled by the warlike sons of Greece."

And then did Neptune, shaker of the shores,  
 Go forth into the battle and amidst 400  
 The clash of spears, and come where stood the  
 chiefs,

Æneas and his mighty foe, the son  
 Of Peleus. Instantly he caused to rise  
 A darkness round the eyes of Peleus' son,  
 And from the buckler of Æneas drew 405  
 The spear with ashen stem and brazen blade,  
 And laid it at Achilles' feet, and next  
 He lifted high Æneas from the ground  
 And bore him thence. O'er many a warrior's head,  
 And many a harnessed steed, Æneas flew, 410  
 Hurl'd by the god, until he reached the rear  
 Of that fierce battle, where the Caucons stood  
 Arrayed for war. The shaker of the shores  
 Drew near, and said to him in wingèd words :—

"What god, Æneas, moved thee to defy 415  
 Madly the son of Peleus, who in might  
 Excels thee, and is dearer to the gods?  
 Whenever he encounters thee in arms  
 Give way, lest thou, against the will of fate,  
 Pass down to Hades. When he shall have met 420

His fate and perished, thou mayst boldly dare  
To face the foremost of the enemy ;  
No other of the Greeks shall take thy life.

He spake, and having thus admonished him  
He left Æneas there, and suddenly 425  
Swept off the darkness that so thickly rose  
Around Achilles, who, with sight now clear,  
Looked forth, and, sighing, said to his great soul :—

“ How strange is this ! My eyes have seen to-day  
A mighty marvel. Here the spear I flung 430  
Is lying on the earth, and him at whom  
I cast it, in the hope to take his life,  
I see no longer. Well beloved, no doubt,  
Is this Æneas by the immortal gods.  
Yet that, I thought, was but an empty boast 435  
Of his. Well, let him go ; I cannot think  
That he who gladly fled from death will find  
The courage to encounter me again.  
And now will I exhort the Greeks to fight  
This battle bravely, while I go to prove 440  
The prowess of the other chiefs of Troy.”

He spake, and, cheering on the soldiery,  
He sprang into the ranks : “ Ye noble Greeks,  
Avoid no more the Trojans ; press right on.  
Let each man single out his man, and fight 445  
With eager heart. ’T is hard for me to chase,  
With all my warlike might, so many men,  
And fight with all. Not even Mars, the god,  
Although immortal, nor Minerva’s self,

Could combat with so vast a multitude 450  
 Unwearied ; yet whatever I can do,  
 With hands and feet and strength, I give my word  
 Not to decline, or be remiss in aught.  
 I go to range the Trojan files, where none,  
 I think, will gladly stand to meet my spear." 455

Such stirring words he uttered, while aloud  
 Illustrious Hector called, encouraging  
 The men of Troy, and promising to meet  
 Achilles : " Valiant Trojans, do not quail  
 Before Pelides. In the strife of words 460  
 I too might bear my part against the gods ;  
 But harder were the combat with the spear,  
 For greater is their might than ours. The son  
 Of Peleus cannot make his threatenings good.  
 A part will he perform and part will leave 465  
 Undone. I go to wait him ; I would go  
 Although his hands were like consuming flame, —  
 His hands like flame, his strength the strength of  
 steel."

He spake : the Trojans at his stirring word  
 Lifted their lances, and the adverse hosts 470  
 Joined battle with a fearful din. Then came  
 Apollo and admonished Hector thus :—

" Hector, encounter not Achilles here  
 Before the armies, but amidst the throng  
 And tumult of the battle, lest perchance 475  
 He strike thee with the javelin or the sword."

He spake : the Trojan chief, dismayed to hear

The warning of the god, withdrew among  
 The crowded ranks. Meantime Achilles sprang  
 Upon the Trojans with a terrible cry, 480  
 And slew a leader of the host, the brave  
 Iphition, whom a Naiad, at the foot  
 Of snowy Tmolus, in the opulent vale  
 Of Hyda, bore to the great conqueror  
 Of towns, Otrynteus. As he came in haste, 485  
 The noble son of Peleus with his spear  
 Smote him upon the forehead in the midst,  
 And cleft the head in two. He fell ; his arms  
 Clashed, and Achilles boasted o'er him thus :—

“ Son of Otrynteus, terrible in arms, 490  
 Thou art brought low ; thou meetest here thy death,  
 Though thou wert born by the Gygæan lake  
 Where lie, by fishy Hyllus and the stream  
 Of eddying Hermus, thy paternal fields.”

Thus boastfully he spake, while darkness came 495  
 Over Iphition's eyes, and underneath  
 The chariots of the Greeks who foremost fought  
 His corse was mangled. Next Achilles smote  
 Antenor's son, Demoleon, gallantly  
 Breasting the onset of the Greeks. He pierced 500  
 His temple through the helmet's brazen cheek ;  
 The brass stayed not the blow ; the eager spear  
 Brake through the bone, and crushed the brain  
 within,

And the brave youth lay dead. Achilles next  
 Struck down Hippodamas ; he pierced his back 505

As, leaping from his car, the Phrygian fled  
Before him. With a moan he breathed away  
His life, as moans a bull when dragged around  
The altar of the Heliconian king  
By youths on whom the god that shakes the earth <sup>510</sup>  
Looks down well pleased. With such a moaning  
sound

The fiery spirit left the Phrygian's frame.

Then sprang Achilles with his spear to slay  
The godlike Polydorus, Priam's son,  
Whose father bade him not to join the war, <sup>515</sup>  
For he was younger than the other sons,  
And dearest of them all. In speed of foot  
He had no peer. Yet, with a boyish pride  
To show his swiftness, in the foremost ranks  
He ranged the field, until he lost his life. <sup>520</sup>  
Him with a javelin the swift-footed son  
Of Peleus smote as he was hurrying by.  
The weapon pierced the middle of his back,  
Where, by its golden rings, the belt was clasped  
Above the double corselet ; the keen blade <sup>525</sup>  
Came forth in front ; the Trojan with a cry  
Fell forward on his knees, and, bending, clasped  
His bowels in his hands. When Hector saw  
His brother thus upon the earth, there came  
A darkness o'er his eyes, nor could he bear <sup>530</sup>  
Longer to stand aloof, but, brandishing  
His spear, came forward like a rushing flame  
To meet the son of Peleus, who beheld

And bounded toward him, saying boastfully :  
" So, he is near whose hand hath given my heart 535  
Its deepest wound, who slew my dearest friend.  
No more are we to shun each other now,  
Timidly stealing through the paths of war."

And then he said to Hector with a frown :  
" Draw nearer, that thou mayst the sooner die." 540

The crested Hector, undismayed, replied :  
" Pelides, do not hope with empty words  
To frighten me, as if I were a boy.  
Insults and taunts I could with ease return.  
I know that thou art brave ; I know that I 545  
In might am not thy equal ; but the event  
Rests in the laps of the great gods, and they  
May, though I lack thy prowess, give thy life  
Into my hands when I shall cast my spear.  
The weapon that I bear is keen like thine." 550

Thus having spoken, brandishing his spear,  
He sent it forth ; but with a gentle breath  
Minerva turned it from the glorious Greek,  
And laid it at the noble Hector's feet.  
Then did Achilles, resolute to slay 555  
His enemy, rush against him with a shout  
Of fury ; but Apollo, with such power  
As gods put forth, withdrew him thence, and spread  
A darkness round him. Thrice the swift of foot,  
Achilles, rushed against him with his spear, 560  
And thrice he smote the cloud. But when once  
more,

In godlike might, he made the assault, he spake  
These wingèd words of menace and reproach : —

“ Hound as thou art, thou hast once more escaped  
Thy death ; for it was near. Again the hand 565  
Of Phœbus rescues thee ; to him thy vows  
Are made ere thou dost trust thyself amidst  
The clash of javelins. I shall meet thee yet  
And end thee utterly, if any god  
Favor me also. I will now pursue 570  
And strike the other Trojan warriors down.”

He spake, and in the middle of the neck  
Smote Dryops with his spear. The Phrygian fell  
Before him at his feet. He left him there,  
And wounding with his spear Philetor's son, 575  
Demuchus, tall and valiant, in the knee,  
Stayed him until he slew him with his sword.  
Then from their chariot to the ground he cast  
Laogonus and Dardanus, the sons  
Of Bias, piercing with a javelin one, 580  
And cutting down the other with his sword.

And Tros, Alastor's son, who came to him  
And clasped his knees, in hope that he would spare  
A captive, — spare his life, nor slay a youth  
Of his own age, — vain hope ! he little knew 585  
That not by prayers Achilles could be moved,  
Nor was he pitiful, nor mild of mood,  
But hard of heart, — while Tros embraced his knees  
And passionately sued, Pelides thrust  
His sword into his side ; the liver came 590

Forth at the wound ; the dark blood gushing filled  
The Phrygian's bosom ; o'er his eyes there crept  
A darkness, and his life was at an end.

Approaching Mulius next, Achilles smote  
The warrior at the ear ; the brazen point 595  
Passed through the other ear ; and then he slew  
Agenor's son, Echeclus, letting fall  
His heavy-hilted sword upon his head  
Just in the midst ; the blade grew warm with blood,  
And gloomy death and unrelenting fate 600  
Darkened the victim's eyes. Achilles next  
Wounded Deucalion, thrusting through his arm  
The brazen javelin, where the sinews met  
That strung the elbow. While with powerless arm  
The wounded Trojan stood awaiting death, 605  
Achilles drave his falchion through his neck.  
Far flew the head and helm, the marrow flowed  
From out the spine, and stretched upon the ground  
Deucalion lay. Pelides still went on,  
O'ertaking Rigmus, the renowned son 610  
Of Peireus, from the fruitful fields of Thrace,  
And smote him in the stomach with his lance.  
There hung the weapon fixed ; the wounded man  
Fell from the car. At Areïthoüs  
The charioteer, who turned his steeds to flee, 615  
Achilles sent his murderous lance, and pierced  
His back, and dashed him from the car, and left  
His horses wild with fright. As when, among  
The deep dells of an arid mountain-side,

A great fire burns its way, and the thick wood 600  
Before it is consumed, and shifting winds  
Hither and thither sweep the flames, so ranged  
Achilles in his fury through the field  
From side to side, and everywhere o'ertook  
His victims, and the earth ran dark with blood. 625

As when a yeoman underneath the yoke  
Brings his broad-fronted oxen to tread out  
White barley on the level threshing-floor,  
The sheaves are quickly trodden small beneath  
The heavy footsteps of the bellowing beasts, 630  
So did the firm-paced coursers, which the son  
Of Peleus guided, trample with their feet  
Bucklers and corpses, while beneath the car  
Blood steeped the axle, and the chariot-seat  
Dripped on its rim with blood, that from below 635  
Was splashed upon them by the horses' hoofs  
And by the chariot-wheels. Such havoc made  
Pelides in his ardor for renown,  
Till his invincible hands were foul with blood.

## BOOK XXI.

NOW when they reached the pleasant banks  
through which  
The eddying Xanthus runs, the river sprung  
From deathless Jove, Achilles drave his foes

Asunder. Part he chased across the plain  
Townward, along the way by which the Greek 5  
In terror fled the day before, pursued  
By glorious Hector. Panic-struck they ran  
Along that way, while, to restrain their flight,  
Before them Juno hung a veil of cloud  
And darkness. Meanwhile half the flying crowd 10  
Leaped down to that deep stream and rolled among  
Its silver eddies. With a mighty noise  
They plunged; the torrent dashed; the banks  
around  
Remurmured shrilly to the cries of those  
Who floated struggling in the current's whirl, 15  
As when before the fierce, devouring flames  
A swarm of locusts, springing into air,  
Fly toward a river, while the fire behind  
Crackles with sudden fierceness, and in fright  
They fall into the waves, the roaring stream 20  
Of the deep-eddied Xanthus thus was filled  
Before Achilles with a mingled crowd  
Of steeds and men. The Jove-descended man  
Left leaning on the tamarisks his spear  
Upon the river's border, and leaped in, 25  
Armed only with his sword, intent to deal  
Death on the fugitives; on every side  
He smote, and from the smitten by the sword  
Rose lamentable cries; the waves around  
Grew crimson with their blood. As when before 30  
A dolphin of huge bulk the fishes flee

In fear, and crowd the creeks that lie around  
The sheltered haven, — for their foe devours  
All that he overtakes, — the Trojans thus  
Hid from his sight among the hollow rocks 35  
Beside the rushing river. When his hand  
Was weary with the work of death, he took  
Twelve youths alive, whose blood was yet to pay  
The penalty for Menœtiades,  
His slaughtered friend. He led them from the  
stream, 40

Passive with fear like fawns, and tied their hands  
Behind them with the well-twined cords that bound  
Their tunics. Then he gave them to his friends,  
Who led the captives to the roomy ships.

Again Achilles rushed upon the foe 45  
Intent on slaughter. One he met who climbed  
The river's bank, Dardanian Priam's son,  
Lycaon, whom in former days he made  
His captive, by surprise, when in the night  
He found him lopping with an axe the boughs 50  
Of a wild fig-tree, that the trunk might form  
The circle of a wheel. Achilles came,  
An unexpected foe, and bore him off  
To sea, and sold him in the populous isle  
Of Lemnos. He was bought by Jason's son, 55  
The Imbrian prince, Eëtion, who had been  
His host, and now redeemed him with large gifts,  
And sent him to Arisba's noble town.  
Yet thence he stole, and reached his father's house

Again, and there made merry with his friends 60  
Eleven days, but on the twelfth a god  
Delivered him again into the hands  
Of Peleus' son, who now would send his soul  
Repining down to Hades. When the chief,  
The swift of foot, beheld him stand unarmed, 65  
With neither helm nor shield nor spear, — for these  
He had thrown down, — faint with the sweaty toil  
Of clambering up the bank, and every limb  
Unstrung with weariness, then wrathfully  
Thus said Achilles to his mighty soul : — 70

“O strange! my eyes behold a miracle.  
Sure, the brave sons of Troy whom I have slain  
Will rise up from the nether darkness yet,  
Since this man, whom I once reprieved from death  
And sold in Lemnos the divine, comes back. 75  
Nor could the ocean's gray abyss of brine,  
Beyond which many long in vain to pass,  
Detain him in that isle. But he shall taste  
The sharpness of my spear, that I may prove  
Whether he after that will reappear, 80  
And whether the kind earth, which holds so well  
The valiant dead, can keep him in her womb.”

So pondered he and stood. The Trojan drew  
Close to him, with intent to clasp his knees,  
Fear-struck, yet hoping to avoid the doom 85  
Of bitter death. The great Achilles raised  
His ponderous spear to strike. Lycaon stooped,  
And, darting underneath the weapon, seized

The hero's knees ; behind him in the ground  
 The spear stood fixed, though eager yet for blood ;<sup>90</sup>  
 One arm was round his adversary's knees,  
 The other held — and would not let it go —  
 The spear, while thus with wingèd words he  
     prayed : —

“I clasp thy knees, Achilles ; look on me  
 Kindly and pity me, O foster-child<sup>95</sup>  
 Of Jove. I am thy suppliant, and may claim  
 Thy mercy. I partook with thee the fruits  
 Of Ceres, when amid my fruitful fields  
 Thou madest me a captive, carrying me  
 From friends and kindred to the sacred isle<sup>100</sup>  
 Of Lemnos. Thou didst sell me there, — my price  
 A hundred beeves, — and thou shalt now receive,  
 For ransom, thrice as many. It is yet  
 But the twelfth morning since I came to Troy  
 After much hardship, and a pitiless fate<sup>105</sup>  
 Betrays me to thy hands. I must believe  
 That Father Jove in wrath delivers me  
 To thee again. Laothoë brought me forth  
 To a brief life ; that mother was the child  
 Of aged Altes, — Altes ruling o'er<sup>110</sup>  
 The warlike Leleges, by whom are tilled  
 The heights of Pedasus, where Satnio flows, —  
 And Priam wedded her with other maids.  
 She bore two children to be slain by thee ;  
 One was the godlike Polydore, whom thou<sup>115</sup>  
 Didst smite with thy keen spear, in the front rank

Of those who fought on foot. His evil fate  
Must overtake me now, for, since a god  
Has brought me near thee, there is no escape.  
Yet let me tell thee this, and weigh it well, 120  
And let it save my life. I came not forth  
From the same womb with Hector, by whose hand  
Thy brave and gentle friend, Patroclus, died."

The illustrious son of Priam ended here  
His prayer, and heard a merciless reply : — 125

" Fool ! never talk of ransom, — not a word.  
Before the evil day on which my friend  
Was slain, it pleased me oftentimes to spare  
The Trojans. Many a one I took alive  
And sold ; but now no man of all their race, 130  
Whom any god may bring within my reach,  
Shall leave the field alive, and least of all  
The sons of Priam. Die thou, then ; and why  
Shouldst thou, my friend, lament ? Patroclus died,  
And greatly he excelled thee. Seest thou not 135  
How eminent in stature and in form  
Am I, whom to a prince renowned for worth  
A goddess mother bore ; yet will there come  
To me a violent death at morn, at eve,  
Or at the midday hour, whenever he 140  
Whose weapon is to take my life shall cast  
The spear or send an arrow from the string."

He spake : the Trojan's heart and knees grew  
faint ;  
His hand let go the spear ; he sat and cowered

With outstretched arms. Achilles drew his sword,  
And smote his neck just at the collar-bone ; 146  
The two-edged blade was buried deep. He fell  
Prone on the earth ; the black blood spouted forth  
And steeped the soil. Achilles by the foot  
Flung him to float among the river-waves, 150  
And uttered, boastfully, these wingèd words :—

“Lie there among the fishes, who shall feed  
Upon thy blood unscared. No mother there  
Shall weep thee lying on thy bier ; thy corpse  
Scamander shall bear down to the broad sea, 155  
Where, as he sees thee darkening its face,  
Some fish shall hasten, darting through the waves,  
To feed upon Lycaon’s fair white limbs.  
So perish ye, till sacred Troy be ours,  
You fleeing, while I follow close and slay. 160  
This river cannot aid you, — this fair stream  
With silver eddies, to whose deity  
Ye offer many beeves in sacrifice,  
And fling into its gulfs your firm-paced steeds ;  
But thus ye all shall perish, till I take 165  
Full vengeance for Patroclus of the Greeks,  
Whom, while I stood aloof from war, ye slew.”

He spake : and, deeply moved with inward wrath,  
The River pondered how to render vain  
The prowess of Achilles, and avert 170  
Destruction from the Trojans. Now the son  
Of Peleus rushed, his ponderous spear in hand,  
To slay Asteropæus, who was sprung

From Pelegon, and Pelegon was born  
To the broad river Axius, of a maid, 175  
The eldest-born of ACESSAMENUS,  
Named PERIBŒA ; for the river-god  
Was joined with her in love. Achilles sprang  
To meet the youth, as, rising from the stream,  
Armed with two spears, he stood, his heart made  
strong 180

And resolute by Xanthus, who had seen  
Indignantly so many Trojans die, —  
Youths whom Achilles slaughtered in his stream,  
And had no pity on them. When the twain  
Were near each other, standing face to face, 185  
The swift Achilles was the first to speak : —  
“ Who and whence art thou that dost venture thus  
To meet me? They who seek to measure strength  
With me are sons of most unhappy men.”

And thus the illustrious son of Pelegon 190  
Made answer : “ Brave Pelides, why inquire  
My lineage? I am from a distant coast, —  
PÆONIA’S fertile fields ; I lead to war  
PÆONIA’S warriors with long spears, and this  
Is now the eleventh morning since I came 195  
To join the war at Troy. I claim descent  
From Axius, the broad Axius, who pours forth  
The fairest river on the earth. His son  
Was Pelegon, expert to wield the spear,  
And I was born to Pelegon. And now, 200  
Illustrious son of Peleus, let us fight.”

He spake : Achilles raised the Pelian ash  
To smite ; Asteropæus aimed at him  
Both lances, for he used both hands alike.  
One struck the Grecian's shield, yet passed not  
through, 205

Stopped by the god-given gold ; the other gashed  
Lightly the elbow of his dexter arm ;  
The black blood spouted forth, the spear passed on  
Beyond him, and, still eager for its prey,  
Stood fixed in earth. Achilles then, intent 210  
To slay Asteropæus, hurled at him

His trusty spear. The weapon missed its mark,  
And, striking the high bank, was buried there  
Up to the middle of its ashen staff.

Achilles drew the keen sword from his thigh, 215  
And flew with fury toward his foe, who toiled  
In vain with sinewy arm to pluck that spear  
From out the bank ; and thrice he shook the beam  
Fiercely, and thrice desisted, lacking strength,  
And last he sought, by bending it, to break 220  
The ashen weapon of Æacides.

But ere it snapped Achilles took his life,  
Smiting him at the navel with the sword.  
Forth gushed the entrails to the ground, and o'er  
His dying eyes the darkness came ; and then 225  
Achilles, leaping on his breast, tore off  
The armor, and exultingly exclaimed :—

“ Lie there ! a perilous task it was for thee  
To combat with a son of Jove, though born

Thyself to a great River. I can boast 230  
Descent from sovereign Jove. I owe my birth  
To Peleus, ruler of the Myrmidons.  
His father was Æacus, who was born  
To Jupiter, a god more potent far  
Than all the rivers flowing to the sea. 235  
And mightier is the race of Jupiter  
Than that of any stream. Here close at hand  
Is a great river, if such aid can aught  
Avail thee ; but to strive with Jupiter  
Is not permitted. Acheloüs, king 240  
Of rivers, cannot vie with him, nor yet  
The great and mighty deep from which proceed  
All streams and seas and founts and watery depths.  
He trembles at the bolt of mighty Jove  
And his hoarse thunder crashing in the sky.” 245

As thus he spake he plucked from out the bank  
His brazen spear, and left the lifeless chief  
Stretched in the sand, where the dark water steeped  
His limbs, and eels and fishes came and gnawed  
The warrior's reins. Achilles hastened on, 250  
Pursuing the Pæonian knights, who now,  
When they beheld their bravest overthrown  
In desperate battle by the mighty arm  
And falchion of Pelides, took to flight  
Along the eddying river. There he slew 255  
Mydon, Thersilochus, Astypylus,  
Mnesus, and Thrasius, and struck down in death  
Ænius and Ophelestes. Many more

Of the Pæonians the swift-footed Greek  
 Had slain, had not the eddying River, roused 260  
 To anger, put a human semblance on,  
 And uttered from its whirling deeps a voice : —

“O son of Peleus! thou who dost excel  
 All other men in might and dreadful deeds, —  
 For the gods aid thee ever, — if the son 265  
 Of Saturn gives thee to destroy the race  
 Of Trojans, drive them from me to the plain,  
 And there perform thy terrible exploits.  
 For now my pleasant waters, in their flow,  
 Are choked with heaps of dead, and I no more 270  
 Can pour them into the great deep, so thick  
 The corpses clog my bed, while thou dost slay  
 And sparest not. Now then, withhold thy hand,  
 Prince of the people! I am horror-struck.”

Achilles the swift-footed made reply : 275  
 “Be it as thou commandest, foster-child  
 Of Jove, Scamander! Yet I shall not cease  
 To slay these treaty-breakers till at length  
 I shut them up within their town, and force  
 Hector to meet me, that we may decide 280  
 Which shall o’ercome the other, — he or I.”

He spake, and rushed upon the men of Troy,  
 Terrible as a god, while from his bed  
 The eddying River called to Phœbus thus : —

“Why this, thou bearer of the silver bow, 285  
 Thou son of Jove? Thou heedest not the will  
 Of Saturn’s son, who strictly bade that thou

Shouldst aid the Trojans till the latest gleam  
Of sunset, and till night is on the fields."

And then Achilles, mighty with the spear, 290  
From the steep bank leaped into the mid-stream,  
While, foul with ooze, the angry River raised  
His waves, and pushed along the heaps of dead  
Slain by Achilles. These, with mighty roar  
As of a bellowing ox, Scamander cast 295  
Aground ; the living with his whirling gulfs  
He hid, and saved them in his friendly streams.  
In tumult terribly the surges rose  
Around Achilles, beating on his shield,  
And made his feet to stagger, till he grasped 300  
A tall, fair-growing elm upon the bank.  
Down came the tree, and in its loosened roots  
Brought the earth with it ; the fair stream was  
checked  
By the thick branches, and the prostrate trunk  
Bridged it from side to side. Achilles sprang 305  
From the deep pool, and fled with rapid feet  
Across the plain in terror. Nor did then  
The mighty river-god refrain, but rose  
Against him with a darker crest, to drive  
The noble son of Peleus from the field, 310  
And so deliver Troy. Pelides sprang  
A spear's cast backward, — sprang with all the speed  
Of the black eagle's wing, the hunter-bird,  
Fleetest and strongest of the fowls of air.  
Like him he darted ; clashing round his breast, 315

The brazen mail rang fearfully. Askance  
He fled ; the water with a mighty roar  
Followed him close. As, when a husbandman  
Leads forth, from some dark spring of earth, a rill  
Among his planted garden-beds, and clears 320  
Its channel, spade in hand, the pebbles there  
Move with the current, which runs murmuring down  
The sloping surface and outstrips its guide, —  
So rushed the waves where'er Achilles ran,  
Swift as he was ; for mightier are the gods 325  
Than men. As often as the noble son  
Of Peleus made a stand in hope to know  
Whether the deathless gods of the great heaven  
Conspired to make him flee, so often came  
A mighty billow of the Jove-born stream 330  
And drenched his shoulders. Then again he sprang  
Away ; the rapid torrent made his knees  
To tremble, while it swept, where'er he trod,  
The earth from underneath his feet. He looked  
To the broad heaven above him, and complained : —  
“ Will not some god, O Father Jove, put forth 336  
His power to save me in my hour of need  
From this fierce river ? Any fate but this  
I am resigned to suffer. None of all  
The immortal ones is more in fault than she 340  
To whom I owe my birth ; her treacherous words  
Deluded me to think that I should fall  
Beneath the walls of Troy by the swift shafts  
Of Phœbus. Would that Hector, the most brave

Of warriors reared upon the Trojan soil, 345  
Had slain me ; he had slain a brave man then,  
And a brave man had stripped me of my arms.  
But now it is my fate to perish, caught  
In this great river, like a swineherd's boy,  
Who in the time of rains attempts to pass 350  
A torrent, and is overwhelmed and drowned."

He spake, and Neptune and Minerva came  
Quickly and stood beside him. In the form  
Of men they came, and took his hand, and cheered  
His spirit with their words. And thus the god 355  
Neptune, who makes the earth to tremble, said : —

"Fear not, Pelides, neither let thy heart  
Be troubled, since thou hast among the gods,  
By Jove's consent, auxiliars such as I  
And Pallas. It is not thy doom to be 360  
Thus vanquished by a river. Soon its rage  
Will cease, as thou shalt see. Meantime we give  
This counsel ; heed it well : let not thy hand  
Refrain from slaughter till the Trojan host  
Are all shut up — all that escape thy arm — 365  
Within the lofty walls of Troy. Then take  
The life of Hector, and return on board  
Thy galleys ; we will make that glory thine."

Thus having spoken, they withdrew and joined  
The immortals, while Achilles hastened on, 370  
Encouraged by the mandate of the gods,  
Across the plain. The plain was overflowed  
With water ; sumptuous arms were floating round,

And bodies of slain youths. Achilles leaped,  
And stemmed with powerful limbs the stream, and  
still

375

Went forward ; for Minerva mightily  
Had strengthened him. Nor did Scamander fail  
To put forth all his power, enraged the more  
Against the son of Peleus ; higher still  
His torrent swelled and tossed with all its waves, 380  
And thus he called to Simoïs with a shout : —

“O brother, join with me to hold in check  
This man, who threatens soon to overthrow  
King Priam’s noble city ; for no more  
The Trojan host resist him. Come at once 385  
And aid me ; fill thy channel from its springs,  
And summon all thy brooks, and lift on high  
A mighty wave, and roll along thy bed,  
Mingled in one great torrent, trees and stones,  
That we may tame this savage man, who now 390  
In triumph walks the field, and bears himself  
As if he were a god. His strength, I deem,  
Will not avail him, nor his noble form,  
Nor those resplendent arms, which yet shall lie  
Scattered along the bottom of my gulfs, 395  
And foul with ooze. Himself too I shall wrap  
In sand, and pile the rubbish of my bed  
In heaps around him. Never shall the Greeks  
Know where to gather up his bones, o’erspread  
By me with river-slime, for there shall be 400  
His burial-place ; no other tomb the Greeks

Will need when they perform his funeral rites."

He spake, and wrathfully he rose against  
Achilles, — rose with turbid waves, and noise,  
And foam, and blood and bodies of the dead. 405  
One purple billow of the Jove-born stream  
Swelled high and whelmed Achilles. Juno saw,  
And trembled lest the hero should be whirled  
Downward by the great river, and in haste  
She called to Vulcan, her beloved son : — 410

"Vulcan, my son, arise! We deemed that thou  
And eddying Xanthus were of equal might  
In battle. Come with instant aid, and bring  
Thy vast array of flames, while from the deep  
I call a tempest of the winds, — the West 415  
And the swift South, — and they shall sweep along  
A fiery torrent to consume the foe,  
Warriors and weapons. Thou meantime lay waste  
The groves along the Xanthus ; hurl at him  
Thy fires, nor let him with soft words or threats 420  
Avert thy fury. Pause not from the work  
Of ruin, till I shout and give the sign,  
And then shalt thou restrain thy restless fires."

She spake, and Vulcan at her word sent forth  
His fierce, devouring flames. Upon the plain 425  
They first were kindled, and consumed the dead  
That strewed it, where Achilles struck them down.  
The ground was dried ; the glimmering flood was  
stayed.

As when the autumnal north-wind, breathing o'er

A newly watered garden, quickly dries 439  
The clammy mould, and makes the tiller glad,  
So did the spacious plain grow dry on which  
The dead were turned to ashes. Then the god  
Seized on the river with his glittering fires.  
The elms, the willows, and the tamarisks 435  
Fell, scorched to cinders, and the lotus-herbs,  
Rushes, and reeds that richly fringed the banks  
Of that fair-flowing current were consumed.  
The eels and fishes, that were wont to glide  
Hither and thither through the pleasant depths 440  
And eddies, languished in the fiery breath  
Of Vulcan, mighty artisan. The strength  
Of the great River withered, and he spake :—

“O Vulcan, there is none of all the gods  
Who may contend with thee. I combat not 445  
With fires like thine. Cease then. With my consent  
The noble son of Peleus may drive out  
The Trojans from their city. What have I  
To do with war,— the attack or the defence?”

Thus in that fiery glow he spake, while seethed 450  
His pleasant streams. As over a strong fire  
A caldron filled with fat of pampered swine  
Glows bubbling on all sides, while underneath  
Burns the dry fuel, thus were his fair streams  
Scorched by the heat, and simmered, while the blast  
Sent forth by Vulcan, the great artisan, 456  
Tormented him, and he besought the aid  
Of Juno with these supplicating words :—

“Why should thy son, O Juno, wreak on me  
His fury, more than on the other gods? 460  
My fault is less than theirs who give their aid  
To Troy ; and I will cease, if thou command.  
Bid him desist, and here I pledge my oath  
Not to attempt to save the Trojan race  
From ruin, though their city sink in flames 465  
Before the torches of the warlike Greeks.”

This when the white-armed goddess Juno heard,  
She said to Vulcan, her beloved son :—

“Dear son, refrain ; it is not well that thus  
A god should suffer for the sake of men.” 470

She spake, and Vulcan quenched his dreadful  
fires,

And back the pleasant waters to their bed  
Went gliding. Xanthus had been made to yield,  
And the two combatants no longer strove  
Since Juno, though offended, bade them cease. 475

Yet was the conflict terrible among  
The other gods, as zeal for different sides  
Impelled them. With a loud uproar they met  
Each other in the field ; the spacious earth  
Rebellowed to the noise, and the great heaven 480  
Returned it. To the ear of Jove it rose,  
Who, sitting on Olympus, laughed within  
His secret heart as he beheld the gods  
Contending, for not long they stood apart.  
Shield-breaking Mars began the assault ; he rushed  
Toward Pallas, brandishing his brazen spear, 485

And thus accosted her with insolent words :—

“Thou shameless one, thou whose effrontery  
Is boundless, why wilt thou provoke the gods  
To strife? Thy temper is most arrogant. 490  
Rememberest thou the time when thou didst prompt  
Tydides Diomed to strike at me?

It was thy hand that held his shining spear,  
And aimed it well, and gave the wound ; but now  
Will I take vengeance on thee for that wrong.” 495

He spake, and smote Minerva's fringed shield,  
The dreadful ægis, which not even Jove  
Could pierce with thunderbolts. The murderous  
Mars

Smote it with his huge spear. She only stepped  
Backward a space, and with her powerful hand 500  
Lifted a stone that lay upon the plain,  
Black, huge, and jagged, which the men of old  
Had placed there for a landmark. This she hurled  
At Mars, and struck him on the neck ; he fell  
With nerveless limbs, and covered, as he lay, 505  
Seven acres of the field : his armor clashed  
Around him in his fall ; his locks all soiled  
Lay in the trodden dust. The goddess stood  
O'er him, and boasted thus with wingèd words :—

“Fool that thou art, hast thou not learned how  
much 510

The might I boast excels thine own, that thus  
Thou measurest strength with me? Now dost thou  
feel

Thy mother's curse fulfilled, who meditates  
Thy chastisement, since thou hast left the Greeks  
And joined the treaty-breaking sons of Troy." 515

She spake, and turned away her glorious eyes.  
Jove's daughter, Venus, took the hand of Mars,  
And led him groaning thence, while hardly yet  
His strength came back. The white-armed Juno  
saw,

And spake to Pallas thus, with wingèd words : — 520

"See, daughter of the Ægis-bearer, Jove,  
Unconquerable maid ! that shameless one,  
Through all the tumult, from the thick of fight,  
Leads hence the murderous Mars ; but follow her."

She spake, and Pallas gladly hastened forth, 525  
And, overtaking Venus, dealt at her  
A mighty buffet on the breast ; her heart  
Fainted, her knees gave way ; and, as she lay  
Prostrate with Mars upon the fruitful earth,  
Exulting Pallas spake these wingèd words : — 530

"Would that all those who aid the cause of Troy  
And combat with the mailèd Greeks were thus !  
Would that they were as hardy and as brave  
As Venus here, who ventured to the help  
Of Mars, and met the force of my right arm ! 535  
Then had the stately Ilium been o'erthrown  
Long since, and we had rested from the war."

She spake : the white-armed Juno gently smiled.  
And then King Neptune to Apollo said : —

"Why, Phœbus, stand we thus aloof ? it ill 540

Becomes us, while the other gods engage  
In conflict. 'T were a shame should we return  
Up to Olympus and the brazen halls  
Of Jove with no blow struck. Begin, for thou  
Art younger born, and I, who both in years 545  
And knowledge am before thee, must not make  
The assault. O silly god, and slow of thought!  
Hast thou indeed forgotten all the wrongs  
We suffered once in Troy, and only we  
Of all the gods, when, sent to earth by Jove, 550  
We served a twelvemonth for a certain hire  
The proud Laomedon, by whom our tasks  
Were set? I built a city and a wall  
Of broad extent, and beautiful, and strong  
To stand assault; and, Phœbus, thou didst feed 555  
His stamping oxen, with curved horns, among  
The lawns of woody Ida seamed with glens.  
But when the welcome hours had brought the day  
Of our reward, the ruffian king refused  
The promised wages, and dismissed us both 560  
With menaces; to bind thee hand and foot  
He threatened, and to sell thee as a slave  
In distant isles, and to cut off the ears  
Of both of us. So we returned to heaven,  
Incensed at him who thus withheld the hire 565  
He promised. Dost thou favor Troy for this?  
Wilt thou not rather act with us until  
These treaty-breakers, with their children all  
And their chaste matrons, perish utterly?"

Then thus the archer-king, Apollo, spake : 570  
“Thou wouldst not deem me wise, should I contend  
With thee, O Neptune, for the sake of men,  
Who flourish like the forest-leaves awhile,  
And feed upon the fruits of earth, and then  
Decay and perish. Let us quit the field, 575  
And leave the combat to the warring hosts.”

He spake, and turned, afraid to meet in arms  
His uncle ; but the sylvan Dian heard, —  
His sister, mistress of the beasts that range  
The wilds, — and harshly thus upbraided him : — 580

“O mighty Archer, dost thou flee and yield  
The victory to Neptune, who bears off  
A glory cheaply earned ? Why dost thou bear  
That idle bow, thou coxcomb ? I shall hope  
No more to hear thee in our father’s halls, 585  
And in the presence of the immortals, boast  
That thou wilt fight with Neptune hand to hand.”

The archer-god, Apollo, answered not ;  
But thus the imperial wife of Jupiter,  
Indignantly and with reproachful words, 590  
Rebuked the quivered goddess of the chase : —

“How is it that thou darest, shameless one,  
Resist me ? Thou wilt find it hard, though trained  
In archery, to match thy strength with mine,  
Though Jove has made thee among womankind 595  
A lioness, and though he gives thee power  
To slay whomever of thy sex thou wilt ;  
Yet wilt thou find it easier to strike down

The mountain beasts of prey, and forest deer,  
Than combat with thy betters. If thou choose 600  
To try the event of battle, then put forth  
Thy strength against me, and thou shalt be taught  
How greatly I excel in might of arm."

Thus Juno spake, and grasped in her left hand  
Both Dian's wrists, and, plucking with her right 605  
The quiver from her shoulders, beat with it  
Her ears, and smiled as under her quick blows  
The sufferer writhed. To earth the arrows fell,  
And Dian weeping fled. As when a dove,  
Not fated to be overtaken yet, 610  
Flees from a hawk to find her hiding-place,  
The hollow rock, so Dian fled in tears,  
And left her arrows. To Latona, then,  
Heaven's messenger, the Argus-queller, spake : —

"Far be it from me to contend with thee, 615  
Latona ; perilous it were to meet  
A consort of the Cloud-compeller, Jove,  
In combat. Go and freely make thy boast  
Among the gods that thou hast vanquished me."

He spake : Latona gathered from the ground 620  
The bow and shafts which in that whirl of dust  
Had fallen here and there, and, bearing them,  
Followed her daughter, who meantime had reached  
Olympus and the brazen halls of Jove.  
And there, a daughter at her father's knees, 625  
She sat her down, while, as she wept, her robe  
Of heavenly texture trembled. Graciously

Jove smiled, and drew her toward him and inquired :  
“ What dweller of the sky has dared do this,  
Dear child, as though some flagrant guilt were thine ? ”

And thus replied the mistress of the chase 631  
Crowned with the crescent : “ Father, ’t was thy  
queen,

The white-armed Juno ; she who causes strife  
And wrath among the gods has done me wrong.”

So talked they, while to sacred Ilium came 635  
Phœbus Apollo ; ’t was his charge to watch  
The well-built city’s ramparts, lest the Greeks  
That day should lay it waste against the will  
Of fate. The other gods went back to heaven,  
Some angry, some exulting. They sat down 640  
Beside the All-Father, him who darkens heaven  
With gathered clouds. Meantime Achilles chased  
And slew the Trojans and their firm-paced steeds.  
As, when the smoke rolls heavenward from a town  
Given by the angry gods a prey to fire, 645  
Toil is the lot of all, and bitter woe  
The fate of many, such the woe and toil  
Caused by Achilles to the sons of Troy.

The aged Priam from a lofty tower  
Beheld the large-limbed son of Peleus range 650  
The field, and all the Trojans helplessly  
Fleeing in tumult. With a cry of grief  
He came from that high station to the ground,  
And gave commandment to the sturdy men  
Who stood to watch the gates along the wall : — 655

“Hold the gates open while the flying host  
Enter the city ; for Achilles comes,  
Routing them, near at hand, and we may see  
Terrible havoc. But when all our troops  
Are once within the walls, and breathe again, 660  
Shut the close-fitting portals ; for I dread  
Lest that fierce warrior rush into our streets.”

He spake : they drew the bolts and opened wide  
The gates, and gave a refuge to the host.  
Then leaped Apollo forth to meet their flight 665  
And rescue them. All faint with burning thirst,  
And grimed with dust, they hurried o’er the plain,  
And toward the city and its lofty walls,  
While eagerly Achilles on their track  
Pressed with his spear ; his heart was full of rage, 670  
And all on fire his spirit with desire  
For glory. Then the Greeks had overthrown  
The towery Troy, if Phœbus had not moved  
Agenor, a young hero, nobly born,  
Blameless, and brave, Antenor’s son, to meet 675  
Achilles. Phœbus breathed into his heart  
Courage, as, standing by the youth, he leaned  
Against a beechen tree, and, wrapped from sight  
In darkness, watched to rescue him from death.  
Agenor stood as he beheld approach 680  
The mighty spoiler, and, perplexed in mind,  
Sighed heavily, and said to his great soul :—

“Ah me ! if with the routed troops I flee  
From fierce Achilles, he will overtake

And slay me ; I shall die as cowards die. 685  
But if I leave the host to be pursued  
By Peleus' son, and by another way  
Flee from the wall across the plain, until  
I reach the lawns of Ida, and am hid  
Among its thickets, then I may at eve 690  
Bathe in the river and return refreshed  
To Troy. But why give way to thoughts like these ?  
For he may yet observe me as I haste  
From Ilium o'er the plain, and his swift feet  
May follow ; there will then be no escape 695  
From death and fate, since he in might of arm  
Excels all other men. If now I here  
Confront him before Troy, I cannot think  
That he is weapon-proof ; one life alone  
Dwells in him, though Saturnian Jupiter 700  
Bestows on him the glory of the day."

He spake, and firmly waited for the son  
Of Peleus ; eagerly his fearless heart  
Longed for the combat. As a panther leaves  
The covert of the wood and comes to meet 705  
A huntsman, nor is scared nor put to flight  
By noise of baying hounds, not even though  
A spear's thrust or a javelin flung from far  
Have wounded him, yet, wounded, he fights on,  
Until he grapples with his enemy 710  
Or perishes, — thus did the noble son  
Of the renowned Antenor press to try  
His prowess with Achilles, and disdained

To flee before him. Holding his round shield  
Before his face, and with his lifted spear 715  
Aimed at the Greek, he shouted thus aloud :—

“ Renowned Achilles ! thou dost fondly hope  
That thou to-day wilt overthrow the town  
Of the magnanimous Trojans. Many toils,  
Thou fool ! must be endured ere that can be ; 720  
For we are many and are brave who dwell  
Within it, and shall well defend the town  
For our beloved parents and our wives  
And little ones. Here shalt thou meet thy doom,  
Brave as thou art, and terrible in war.” 725

As thus he spake, his powerful hand dismissed  
The keen-edged spear, nor missed his aim ; it struck  
The son of Peleus just below the knee.

The tin of which the greave was newly forged  
Rang shrilly, and sent back the brazen point ; 730  
It could not pierce the armor which a god  
Had given. And then the son of Peleus aimed  
His weapon at Agenor. Phœbus came  
And snatched away his triumph, bearing off  
The godlike youth, Agenor, in a veil 735  
Of darkness from the perils of the war.

Then he decoyed Achilles from the host  
Of Troy ; the archer of the skies put on  
Agenor’s perfect semblance, and appeared  
Before the Greek, and fled ; his hasty flight 740  
Was followed close. Achilles chased the god  
Ever before him, yet still near, across

The fruitful fields, to the deep-eddied stream  
 Of Xanthus ; for Apollo artfully  
 Made it to seem that he should soon o’ertake 745  
 His flying foe, and thus beguiled him on.  
 Meantime the routed Trojans gladly thronged  
 Into the city, filled the streets, and closed  
 The portals. None now dared without the walls  
 To wait for others, or remain to know 750  
 Who had escaped with life, and who were slain  
 In battle ; eagerly they flung themselves  
 Into the city, — every one whose feet  
 And knees had borne him from the field alive.

## BOOK XXII.

**T**HUS were they driven within the city walls  
 Like frightened fawns, and there dispersing  
 cooled  
 Their sweaty limbs, and quenched their eager thirst,  
 And rested on the battlements. The Greeks,  
 Bearing their shields upon their shoulders, came 5  
 Close to the ramparts. Hector’s adverse fate  
 Detained him still without the walls of Troy,  
 And near the Scæan gates. Meantime the god  
 Apollo to the son of Peleus said :—  
 “ O son of Peleus ! why pursue me thus 10  
 With thy swift feet, — a mortal man in chase

Of an immortal? That I am a god  
Thou seest not yet, but turnest all thy rage  
On me, and, having put the host of Troy  
To rout, dost think of them no more. They find 15  
A refuge in their town, while far astray  
Thou wanderest hither. Thou hast not the power  
To slay me ; I am not of mortal birth."

The swift Achilles angrily replied :  
" O archer-god, thou most unjust of all 20  
The immortals ! thou hast wronged me, luring me  
Aside ; since many a warrior I had forced  
To bite the dust before they reached the gates  
Of Ilium but for thee, who from my grasp  
Hast snatched the glory and hast rescued them. 25  
Thou didst not fear my vengeance ; yet if power  
Were given me, I would punish thee for this."

He spake, and with heroic purpose turned  
Toward Ilium. As a steed that wins the race  
Flies at his utmost speed across the plain, 30  
And whirls along the chariot, with such speed  
The son of Peleus moved his rapid feet.

The aged monarch Priam was the first  
To see him as he scoured the plain, and shone  
Like to the star which in the autumn time 35  
Rises and glows among the lights of heaven  
With eminent lustre at the dead of night, —  
Orion's Hound they call it, — bright indeed,  
And yet of baleful omen, for it brings  
Distressing heat to miserable men. 40

So shone the brass upon the warrior's breast  
As on he flew. The aged Priam groaned,  
And smote his head with lifted hands, and called  
Aloud, imploring his beloved son,  
Who eagerly before the city gate 45  
Waited his foe Achilles. Priam thus,  
With outstretched hands, besought him piteously : —

“O wait not, Hector, my beloved son,  
To combat with Pelides, thus alone  
And far from succor, lest thou meet thy death, 50  
Slain by his hand, for he is mightier far  
Than thou art. Would that he, the cruel one,  
Were but as much the favorite of the gods  
As he is mine ! then should the birds of prey  
And dogs devour his carcass, and the grief 55  
That weighs upon my spirit would depart.  
I have been robbed by him of many sons, —  
Brave youths, whom he has slain or sold as slaves  
In distant isles ; and now I see no more  
Among our host on whom the gates are closed 60  
My Polydorus and Lycaon, whom  
The peerless dame Laothoë bore to me.  
If yet they are within the Grecian camp,  
I will redeem their lives with brass and gold ;  
For I have store, which Altes, the renowned 65  
And aged, gave his daughter. If they live  
No longer, but have passed to the abode  
Of Hades, bitter will our sorrow be, —  
Mine and their mother's, — but the popular grief

Will sooner be consoled if thou fall not, 70  
Slain by Achilles. Come within the walls,  
My son, that thou mayst still be the defence  
Of Ilium's sons and daughters, nor increase  
The glory of Pelides with the loss  
Of thine own life. Have pity upon me, 75  
Who only live to suffer, — whom the son  
Of Saturn, on the threshold of my age,  
Hath destined to endure a thousand griefs;  
And then to be destroyed, — to see my sons  
Slain by the sword, my daughters dragged away 80  
Into captivity, their chambers made  
A spoil, our infants dashed against the ground  
By cruel hands, the consorts of my sons  
Borne off by the ferocious Greeks ; and last,  
Perchance the very dogs which I have fed 85  
Here in my palaces and at my board,  
The guardians of my doors, when, by the spear  
Or sword, some enemy shall take my life,  
And at my threshold leave me stretched a corpse,  
Will rend me, and, with savage greediness, 90  
Will lap my blood, and in the porch lie down.  
When one in prime of youth lies slain in war,  
Gashed with the spear, his wounds become him well,  
And honor him in all men's eyes ; but when  
An aged man is slain, and his white head 95  
And his white beard and limbs are foully torn  
By ravening dogs, there is no sadder sight."

So the old monarch spake, and with his hands

Tore his gray hair, but moved not Hector thus.  
Then came, with lamentations and in tears, 100  
The warrior's mother forward. One hand laid  
Her bosom bare ; she pressed the other hand  
Beneath it, sobbed, and spake these wingèd words :—

“ Revere this bosom, Hector, and on me  
Have pity. If when thou wert but a babe 105  
I ever on this bosom stilled thy cries,  
Think of it now, beloved child ; avoid  
That dreadful chief ; withdraw within the walls,  
Nor madly think to encounter him alone,  
Son of my love and of my womb ! If he 110  
Should slay thee, I shall not lament thy death  
Above thy bier, — I, nor thy noble wife, —  
But far from us the greedy dogs will throng  
To mangle thee beside the Grecian fleet.”

Thus, weeping bitterly, the aged pair 115  
Entreated their dear son, yet moved him not.  
He stood and waited for his mighty foe  
Achilles, as a serpent at his den,  
Fed on the poisons of the wild, awaits  
The traveller, and, fierce with hate of man, 120  
And glaring fearfully, lies coiled within.  
So waited Hector with a resolute heart,  
And kept his ground, and, leaning his bright shield  
Against a tower that juttèd from the walls,  
Conferred with his great soul impatiently : — 125

“ Ah me ! if I should pass within the walls,  
Then will Polydamas be first to cast

Reproach upon me ; for he counselled me  
To lead the Trojans back into the town  
That fatal night which saw Achilles rise 130  
To join the war again. I yielded not  
To his advice ; far better if I had.  
Now, since my fatal stubbornness has brought  
This ruin on my people, I most dread  
The censure of the men and long-robed dames 135  
Of Ilium. Men less brave than I will say,  
' Foolhardy Hector in his pride has thrown  
His people's lives away.' So will they speak,  
And better were it for me to return,  
Achilles slain, or, slain myself by him, 140  
To perish for my country gloriously.  
But should I lay aside this bossy shield  
And this stout helm, and lean against the wall  
This spear, and go to meet the gallant son  
Of Peleus, with a promise to restore 145  
Helen and all the treasure brought with her  
To Troy by Paris, in his roomy ships, —  
All that the war was waged for, — that the sons  
Of Atreus may convey it hence, besides  
Wealth drawn from all the hoards within the town,  
And to be shared among the Greeks ; for I 151  
Would bind the Trojans by a solemn oath  
To keep back nothing, but divide the whole —  
Whate'er of riches this fair town contains —  
Into two parts — But why should I waste thought  
On plans like these ? I must not act the part 156

Of suppliant to a man who may not show  
Regard or mercy, but may hew me down  
Defenceless, with my armor laid aside  
As if I were a woman. Not with him 160  
May I hold parley from a tree or rock,  
As youths and maidens with each other hold  
Light converse. Better 't were to rush at once  
To combat, and the sooner learn to whom  
Olympian Jove decrees the victory." 165

Such were his thoughts. Achilles now drew near.  
Like crested Mars, the warrior-god, he came.  
On his right shoulder quivered fearfully  
The Pelian ash, and from his burnished mail  
There streamed a light as of a blazing fire, 170  
Or of the rising sun. When Hector saw,  
He trembled, nor could venture to remain,  
But left the gates and fled away in fear.  
Pelides, trusting to his rapid feet,  
Pursued him. As, among the mountain wilds, 175  
A falcon, fleetest of the birds of air,  
Darts toward a timid dove that wheels away  
To shun him by a sidelong flight, while he  
Springs after her again and yet again,  
And screaming follows, certain of his prey, — 180  
Thus onward flew Achilles, while as fast  
Fled Hector in dismay, with hurrying feet,  
Beside the wall. They passed the Mount of View,  
And the wind-beaten fig-tree, and they ran  
Along the public way by which the wall 185

Was skirted, till they came where from the ground  
 The two fair springs of eddying Xanthus rise, —  
 One pouring a warm stream from which ascends  
 And spreads a vapor like a smoke from fire ;  
 The other, even in summer, sending forth 190  
 A current cold as hail, or snow, or ice.  
 And there were broad stone basins, fairly wrought,  
 At which, in time of peace, before the Greeks  
 Had landed on the plain, the Trojan dames  
 And their fair daughters washed their sumptuous  
 robes. 195

Past these they swept ; one fled, and one pursued, —  
 A brave man fled, a braver followed close,  
 And swiftly both. Not for a common prize,  
 A victim from the herd, a bullock's hide,  
 Such as reward the fleet of foot, they ran, — 200  
 The race was for the knightly Hector's life.  
 As firm-paced coursers, that are wont to win,  
 Fly toward the goal, when some magnificent prize,  
 A tripod or a damsel, is proposed  
 In honor of some hero's obsequies, 205  
 So these flew thrice on rapid feet around  
 The city of Priam. All the gods of heaven  
 Looked on, and thus the Almighty Father spake : —

“ Alas ! I see a hero dear to me  
 Pursued around the wall. My heart is grieved 210  
 For Hector, who has brought so many thighs  
 Of bullocks to my altar on the side  
 Of Ida ploughed with glens, or on the heights

Of Ilium. The renowned Achilles now  
Is chasing him with rapid feet around 215  
The city of Priam. Now bethink yourselves,  
And answer. Shall we rescue him from death?  
Or shall we doom him, valiant as he is,  
To perish by the hand of Peleus' son?"

Minerva, blue-eyed goddess, answered thus : 220  
"O Father, who dost hurl the thunderbolt,  
And hide the sky in clouds, what hast thou said?  
Wouldst thou reprieve from death a mortal man,  
Whose doom is fixed? Then do it ; but know this,  
That all the other gods will not approve." 225

Then spake again the Cloud-compeller Jove :  
"Tritonia, my dear child, be calm. I spake  
Of no design. I would be kind to thee.  
Do as thou wilt, and be there no delay."

He spake ; and Pallas from the Olympian peaks,  
Encouraged by his words in what her thought 231  
Had planned already, downward shot to earth.  
Still, with quick steps, the fleet Achilles pressed  
On Hector's flight. As when a hound has roused  
A fawn from its retreat among the hills, 235  
And chases it through glen and forest ground,  
And to close thickets, where it skulks in fear  
Until he overtake it, Hector thus  
Sought vainly to elude the fleet pursuit  
Of Peleus' son. As often as he thought, 240  
By springing toward the gates of Troy, to gain  
Aid from the weapons of his friends who stood

On the tall towers, so often was the Greek  
 Before him, forcing him to turn away  
 From Ilium toward the plain. Achilles thus 245  
 Kept nearest to the city. As in dreams  
 The fleet pursuer cannot overtake,  
 Nor the pursued escape, so was it now ;  
 One followed but in vain, the other fled  
 As fruitlessly. But how could Hector thus 250  
 Have put aside the imminent doom of death,  
 Had not Apollo met him once again,  
 For the last time, and given him strength and speed ?

The great Achilles nodded to his host  
 A sign that no man should presume to strike 255  
 At Hector with his weapon, lest perchance  
 Another, wounding him, should bear away  
 The glory, and Pelides only wear  
 The second honors. When the twain had come  
 For the fourth time beside Scamander's springs, 260  
 The All-Father raised the golden balance high,  
 And, placing in the scales two lots which bring  
 Death's long dark sleep, — one lot for Peleus' son,  
 And one for knightly Hector, — by the midst  
 He poised the balance. Hector's fate sank down 265  
 To Hades, and Apollo left the field.

The blue-eyed goddess Pallas then approached.  
 The son of Peleus with these wingèd words : —

“Renowned Achilles, dear to Jupiter !  
 Now may we, as I hope, at last return 270  
 To the Achaian army and the fleet

With glory, Hector slain, the terrible  
In war. Escape he cannot, even though  
The archer-god Apollo fling himself  
With passionate entreaty at the feet 275  
Of Jove the Ægis-bearer. Stay thou here  
And breathe a moment, while I go to him  
And lure him hither to encounter thee."

She spake, and he obeyed, and gladly stood  
Propped on the ashen stem of his keen spear ; 280  
While, passing on, Minerva overtook  
The noble Hector. In the outward form,  
And with the strong voice of Deiphobus,  
She stood by him and spake these wingèd words : —

"Hard pressed I find thee, brother, by the swift 285  
Achilles, who, with feet that never rest,  
Pursues thee round the walls of Priam's town.  
But let us make a stand and beat him back."

And then the crested Hector spake in turn :  
"Deiphobus, thou ever hast been dear 290  
To me beyond my other brethren, sons  
Of Hecuba and Priam. Now still more  
I honor thee, since thou hast seen my plight,  
And for my sake hast ventured forth without  
The gates, while all the rest remain within." 295

And then the blue-eyed Pallas spake again :  
"Brother ! 't is true, my father, and the queen,  
My mother, and my comrades, clasped my knees  
In turn, and earnestly entreated me  
That I would not go forth, such fear had fallen 300

On all of them ; but I was grieved for thee.  
 Now let us combat valiantly, nor spare  
 The weapons that we bear, and we shall learn  
 Whether Achilles, having slain us both,  
 Will carry to the fleet our bloody spoil, 305  
 Or die himself, the victim of thy spear."

The treacherous goddess spake, and led the way ;  
 And when the advancing chiefs stood face to face,  
 The crested hero, Hector, thus began : —

"No longer I avoid thee as of late, 310  
 O son of Peleus ! Thrice around the walls  
 Of Priam's mighty city have I fled,  
 Nor dared to wait thy coming. Now my heart  
 Bids me encounter thee ; my time is come  
 To slay or to be slain. Now let us call 315  
 The gods to witness, who attest and guard  
 The covenants of men. Should Jove bestow  
 On me the victory, and I take thy life,  
 Thou shalt meet no dishonor at my hands ;  
 But, stripping off the armor, I will send 320  
 The Greeks thy body. Do the like by me."

The swift Achilles answered with a frown :  
 "Accursed Hector, never talk to me  
 Of covenants. Men and lions plight no faith,  
 Nor wolves agree with lambs, but each must plan 325  
 Evil against the other So between  
 Thyself and me no compact can exist,  
 Or understood intent. First, one of us  
 Must fall and yield his life-blood to the god

Of battles. Summon all thy valor now. 330  
A skilful spearman thou hast need to be,  
And a bold warrior. There is no escape,  
For now doth Pallas doom thee to be slain  
By my good spear. Thou shalt repay to me  
The evil thou hast done my countrymen, — 335  
My friends whom thou hast slaughtered in thy rage.”

He spake, and, brandishing his massive spear,  
Hurled it at Hector, who beheld its aim  
From where he stood. He stooped, and over him  
The brazen weapon passed, and plunged to earth. 340  
Unseen by royal Hector, Pallas went  
And plucked it from the ground, and brought it back  
And gave it to the hands of Peleus' son,  
While Hector said to his illustrious foe : —

“Godlike Achilles, thou hast missed thy mark ; 345  
Nor hast thou learned my doom from Jupiter,  
As thou pretendest. Thou art glib of tongue,  
And cunningly thou orderest thy speech,  
In hope that I who hear thee may forget  
My might and valor. Think not I shall flee, 350  
That thou mayst pierce my back ; for thou shalt send  
Thy spear, if God permit thee, through my breast  
As I rush on thee. Now avoid in turn  
My brazen weapon. Would that it might pass  
Clean through thee, all its length ! The tasks of war  
For us of Troy were lighter for thy death, 355  
Thou pest and deadly foe of all our race !”

He spake, and brandishing his massive spear,

Hurled it, nor missed, but in the centre smote  
The buckler of Pelides. Far away 360  
It bounded from the brass, and he was vexed  
To see that the swift weapon from his hand  
Had flown in vain. He stood perplexed and sad ;  
No second spear had he. He called aloud  
On the white-bucklered chief, Deiphobus, 365  
To bring another ; but that chief was far,  
And Hector saw that it was so, and said : —

“ Ah me ! the gods have summoned me to die.  
I thought my warrior-friend, Deiphobus,  
Was by my side ; but he is still in Troy, 370  
And Pallas has deceived me. Now my death  
Cannot be far, — is near ; there is no hope  
Of my escape, for so it pleases Jove  
And Jove’s great archer-son, who have till now  
Delivered me. My hour at last is come ; 375  
Yet not ingloriously or passively  
I die, but first will do some valiant deed,  
Of which mankind shall hear in after time.”

He spake, and drew the keen-edged sword that  
hung,  
Massive and finely tempered, at his side, 380  
And sprang — as when an eagle high in heaven,  
Through the thick cloud, darts downward to the  
plain  
To clutch some tender lamb or timid hare,  
So Hector, brandishing that keen-edged sword,  
Sprang forward, while Achilles opposite 385

Leaped toward him, all on fire with savage hate,  
And holding his bright buckler, nobly wrought,  
Before him. On his shining helmet waved  
The fourfold crest ; there tossed the golden tufts  
With which the hand of Vulcan lavishly 390  
Had decked it. As in the still hours of night  
Hesper goes forth among the host of stars,  
The fairest light of heaven, so brightly shone,  
Brandished in the right hand of Peleus' son,  
The spear's keen blade, as, confident to slay 395  
The noble Hector, o'er his glorious form  
His quick eye ran, exploring where to plant  
The surest wound. The glittering mail of brass  
Won from the slain Patroclus guarded well  
Each part, save only where the collar-bones 400  
Divide the shoulder from the neck, and there  
Appeared the throat, the spot where life is most  
In peril. Through that part the noble son  
Of Peleus drave his spear ; it went quite through  
The tender neck, and yet the brazen blade 405  
Cleft not the windpipe, and the power to speak  
Remained. The Trojan fell amid the dust,  
And thus Achilles boasted o'er his fall : —

“Hector, when from the slain Patroclus thou  
Didst strip his armor, little didst thou think 420  
Of danger. Thou hadst then no fear of me,  
Who was not near thee to avenge his death.  
Fool ! there was left within the roomy ships  
A mightier one than he, who should come forth,

The avenger of his blood, to take thy life. 415  
 Foul dogs and birds of prey shall tear thy flesh ;  
 The Greeks shall honor him with funeral rites."

And then the crested Hector faintly said :  
 "I pray thee by thy life, and by thy knees,  
 And by thy parents, suffer not the dogs 420  
 To tear me at the galleys of the Greeks.  
 Accept abundant store of brass and gold,  
 Which gladly will my father and the queen,  
 My mother, give in ransom. Send to them  
 My body, that the warriors and the dames 425  
 Of Troy may light for me the funeral pile."

The swift Achilles answered with a frown :  
 "Nay, by my knees entreat me not, thou cur,  
 Nor by my parents. I could even wish  
 My fury prompted me to cut thy flesh 430  
 In fragments, and devour it, such the wrong  
 That I have had from thee. There will be none  
 To drive away the dogs about thy head,  
 Not though thy Trojan friends should bring to me  
 Tenfold and twenty-fold the offered gifts, 435  
 And promise others, — not though Priam, sprung  
 From Dardanus, should send thy weight in gold.  
 Thy mother shall not lay thee on thy bier,  
 To sorrow over thee whom she brought forth ;  
 But dogs and birds of prey shall mangle thee." 440

And then the crested Hector, dying, said :  
 "I know thee, and too clearly I foresaw  
 I should not move thee, for thou hast a heart

Of iron. Yet reflect that for my sake  
 The anger of the gods may fall on thee, 475  
 When Paris and Apollo strike thee down,  
 Strong as thou art, before the Scæan gates."

Thus Hector spake, and straightway o'er him  
 closed

The night of death ; the soul forsook his limbs,  
 And flew to Hades, grieving for its fate, — 480  
 So soon divorced from youth and youthful might.  
 Then said the great Achilles to the dead : —

"Die thou ; and I, whenever it shall please  
 Jove and the other gods, will meet my fate."

He spake, and, plucking forth his brazen lance, 485  
 He laid it by, and from the body stripped  
 The bloody mail. The thronging Greeks beheld  
 With wonder Hector's tall and stately form,  
 And no one came who did not add a wound ;  
 And, looking to each other, thus they said : — 490

"How much more tamely Hector now endures  
 Our touch than when he set the fleet on fire !"

Such were the words of those who smote the dead ;  
 But now, when swift Achilles from the corpse  
 Had stripped the armor, he stood forth among 495  
 The Achaian host, and spake these wingèd words : —

"Leaders and princes of the Grecian host !  
 Since we, my friends, by favor of the gods,  
 Have overcome the chief who wrought more harm  
 To us than all the rest, let us assault 470  
 The town, and learn what they of Troy intend, —

Whether their troops will leave the citadel  
Since he is slain, or hold it with strong hand,  
Though Hector is no more. But why give thought  
To plans like these while yet Patroclus lies 475  
A corse unwept, unburied, at the fleet?

I never will forget him while I live  
And while these limbs have motion. Though below  
In Hades they forget the dead, yet I  
Will there remember my beloved friend. 480

Now then, ye youths of Greece, move on and chant  
A pæan, while, returning to the fleet,  
We bring great glory with us ; we have slain  
The noble Hector, whom, throughout their town,  
The Trojans ever worshipped like a god." 485

He spake, and, planning in his mind to treat  
The noble Hector shamefully, he bored  
The sinews of his feet between the heel  
And ankle ; drawing through them leathern thongs  
He bound them to the car, but left the head 490  
To trail in dust. And then he climbed the car,  
Took in the shining mail, and lashed to speed  
The coursers. Not unwillingly they flew.  
Around the dead, as he was dragged along,  
The dust arose ; his dark locks swept the ground. 495  
That head, of late so noble in men's eyes,  
Lay deep amid the dust, for Jove that day  
Suffered the foes of Hector to insult  
His corse in his own land. His mother saw,  
And tore her hair, and flung her lustrous veil 500

Away, and uttered piercing shrieks. No less  
His father, who so loved him, piteously  
Bewailed him ; and in all the streets of Troy  
The people wept aloud, with such lament  
As if the towery Ilium were in flames 505  
Even to its loftiest roofs. They scarce could keep  
The aged king within, who, wild with grief,  
Struggled to rush through the Dardanian gates,  
And, rolling in the dust, entreated all  
Who stood around him, calling them by name : — 510

“ Refrain, my friends, though kind be your intent.  
Let me go forth alone, and at the fleet  
Of Greece will I entreat this man of blood  
And violence. He may perchance be moved  
With reverence for my age, and pity me 515  
In my gray hairs ; for such a one as I  
Is Peleus, his own father, by whose care  
This Greek was reared to be a scourge to Troy,  
And, more than all, a cause of grief to me,  
So many sons of mine in life’s fresh prime 520  
Have fallen by his hand. I mourn for them,  
But not with such keen anguish as I mourn  
For Hector. Sorrow for his death will bring  
My soul to Hades. Would that he had died  
Here in my arms ! this solace had been ours, — 525  
His most unhappy mother and myself  
Had stooped to shed these tears upon his bier.”

He spake, and wept, and all the citizens  
Wept with him. Hecuba among the dames

Took up the lamentation, and began : —

530

“Why do I live, my son, when thou art dead,  
And I so wretched? — thou who wert my boast  
Ever, by night and day, where’er I went,  
And whom the Trojan men and matrons called  
Their bulwark, honoring thee as if thou wert  
A god. They glory in thy might no more,  
Since Fate and Death have overtaken thee.”

535

Weeping she spake. Meantime Andromache  
Had heard no tidings of her husband yet.  
No messenger had even come to say  
That he was still without the gates. She sat  
In a recess of those magnificent halls,  
And wove a twofold web of brilliant hues,  
On which were scattered flowers of rare device ;  
And she had given her bright-haired maidens charge  
To place an ample caldron on the fire,  
That Hector, coming from the battle-field,  
Might find the warm bath ready. Thoughtless one !  
She knew not that the blue-eyed archer-queen,  
Far from the bath prepared for him, had slain  
Her husband by the hand of Peleus’ son.  
She heard the shrieks, the wail upon the tower,  
Trembled in every limb, and quickly dropped  
The shuttle, saying to her bright-haired maids : —

540

545

550

“Come with me, two of you, that I may learn  
What now has happened. ’T is my mother’s voice  
That I have heard. My heart leaps to my mouth ;  
My limbs fail under me. Some deadly harm

555

Hangs over Priam's sons ; far be the hour  
When I shall hear of it. And yet I fear 560  
Lest that Achilles, having got between  
The daring Hector and the city gates,  
May drive him to the plain alone, and quell  
The desperate valor that was ever his ;  
For never would he keep the ranks, but ranged 565  
Beyond them, and gave way to no man's might."

She spake, and from the royal mansion rushed  
Distractedly, and with a beating heart.  
Her maids went with her. When she reached the  
tower

And throng of men, and, standing on the wall, 570  
Looked forth, she saw her husband dragged away  
Before the city. Toward the Grecian fleet  
The swift steeds drew him. Sudden darkness came  
Over her eyes, and in a breathless swoon  
She sank away and fell. The ornaments 575  
Dropped from her brow, — the wreath, the woven  
band,

The net, the veil which golden Venus gave  
That day when crested Hector wedded her,  
Dowered with large gifts, and led her from her home,  
Eëtion's palace. Round her in a throng 580  
Her sisters of the house of Priam pressed,  
And gently raised her in that deathlike swoon.  
But when she breathed again, and to its seat  
The conscious mind returned, as in their arms  
She lay, with sobs and broken speech she said : — 585

“Hector, — O wretched me! — we both were  
born

To sorrow ; thou at Troy, in Priam's house,  
And I at Thebè in Eëtion's halls,  
By woody Placos. From a little child  
He reared me there, — unhappy he, and I 590  
Unhappy ! O that I had ne'er been born !  
Thou goest down to Hades and the depths  
Of earth, and leavest me in thine abode,  
Widowed, and never to be comforted.  
Thy son, a speechless babe, to whom we two 595  
Gave being, — hapless parents ! — cannot have  
Thy loving guardianship now thou art dead,  
Nor be a joy to thee. Though he survive  
The cruel warfare which the sons of Greece  
Are waging, hard and evil yet will be 660  
His lot hereafter ; others will remove  
His landmarks and will make his fields their own.  
The day in which a boy is fatherless  
Makes him companionless ; with downcast eyes  
He wanders, and his cheeks are stained with tears.  
Unfed he goes where sit his father's friends, 606  
And plucks one by the cloak, and by the robe  
Another. One who pities him shall give  
A scanty draught, which only wets his lips,  
But not his palate ; while another boy, 610  
Whose parents both are living, thrusts him thence  
With blows and vulgar clamor : ‘ Get thee gone !  
Thy father is not with us at the feast.’

Then to his widowed mother shall return  
Astyanax in tears, who not long since 615  
Was fed, while sitting in his father's lap,  
On marrow and the delicate fat of lambs.  
And ever when his childish sports had tired  
The boy, and sleep came stealing over him,  
He slumbered, softly cushioned, on a couch 620  
And in his nurse's arms, his heart at ease  
And satiate with delights. But now thy son  
Astyanax, — whom so the Trojans name  
Because thy valor guarded gate and tower, —  
Thy care withdrawn, shall suffer many things. 625  
While far from those who gave thee birth, beside  
The roomy ships of Greece, the restless worms  
Shall make thy flesh their banquet when the dogs  
Have gorged themselves. Thy garments yet remain  
Within the palace, delicately wrought 630  
And graceful, woven by the women's hands ;  
And these, since thou shalt put them on no more,  
Nor wear them in thy death, I burn with fire  
Before the Trojan men and dames ; and all  
Shall see how gloriously thou wert arrayed." 635  
Weeping she spake, and with her wept her maids.

## BOOK XXIII.

SO mourned they in the city ; but the Greeks,  
When they had reached the fleet and Helles-  
pont,

Dispersed, repairing each one to his ship,  
Save that Achilles suffered not his band  
Of Myrmidons to part in disarray. 5

And thus the chief enjoined his warrior friends :—

“ Myrmidons, gallant knights, my cherished  
friends !

Let us not yet unyoke our firm-paced steeds,  
But bring them with the chariots, and bewail  
Patroclus with the honors due the dead, 10  
And, when we have indulged in grief, release  
Our steeds and take our evening banquet here.”

He spake, and led by him the host broke forth  
In lamentation. Thrice around the dead,  
Weeping, they drave their steeds with stately manes,  
While Thetis in their hearts awoke the sense 15  
Of hopeless loss ; their tears bedewed the sands,  
And dropped upon their arms, so brave was he  
For whom they sorrowed. Peleus’ son began  
The mourning ; on the breast of his dead friend 20  
He placed his homicidal hands, and said :—

“ Hail thou, Patroclus, even amid the shades !  
For now shall I perform what once I vowed :

That, dragging Hector hither, I will give  
His corse to dogs, and they shall rend his flesh ; 25  
And at thy funeral pile there shall be slain  
Twelve noble Trojan youths, to avenge thy death."

So spake he, meditating outrages  
To noble Hector's corse, which he had flung  
Beside the bier of Menœtiades, 30  
Amid the dust. The Myrmidons unbraced  
Their shining brazen armor, and unyoked  
Their neighing steeds, and sat in thick array  
Beside the ship of swift Æacides,  
While he set forth a sumptuous funeral feast. 35  
Many a white ox, that day, beneath the axe  
Fell to the earth, and many bleating goats  
And sheep were slain, and many fattened swine,  
White-toothed, were stretched to roast before the  
flame

Of Vulcan, and around the corse the earth 40  
Floated with blood. Meantime the Grecian chiefs  
To noble Agamemnon's royal tent  
Led the swift son of Peleus, though he went  
Unwillingly, such anger for the death  
Of his companion burned within his heart. 45  
As soon as they had reached his tent, the king  
Bade the clear-throated heralds o'er the fire  
Place a huge tripod, that Pelides there  
Might wash away the bloody stains he bore.  
Yet would he not, and with an oath replied : — 50  
"No ! by the greatest and the best of gods,

By Jupiter, I may not plunge my head  
Into the bath before I lay my friend  
Patroclus on the fire, and heap his mound,  
And till my hair is shorn ; for never more 55  
In life will be so great a sorrow mine.

But now attend we to this mournful feast.  
And with the morn, O king of men, command  
That wood be brought, and all things duly done  
Which may beseem a warrior who goes down 60  
Into the lower darkness. Let the flames  
Seize fiercely and consume him from our sight,  
And leave the people to the tasks of war."

He spake ; they hearkened and obeyed, and all  
Prepared with diligent hands the meal, and each 65  
Sat down and took his portion of the feast.

And when their thirst and hunger were allayed,  
Most to their tents betook them and to rest.  
But Peleus' son, lamenting bitterly,  
Lay down among his Myrmidons, beside 70  
The murmuring ocean, in the open space,  
Where plashed the billows on the beach. And  
there,

When slumber, bringing respite from his cares,  
Came softly and enfolded him, — for much  
His shapely limbs were wearied with the chase 75  
Of Hector round the windy Ilium's walls, —  
The soul of his poor friend Patroclus came,  
Like him in all things, — stature, beautiful eyes,  
And voice, and garments which he wore in life.

Beside his head the vision stood and spake :— 80

“ Achilles, sleepest thou, forgetting me ?

Never of me unmindful in my life,

Thou dost neglect me dead. O, bury me

Quickly, and give me entrance through the gates

Of Hades ; for the souls, the forms of those 85

Who live no more, repulse me, suffering not

That I should join their company beyond

The river, and I now must wander round

The spacious portals of the House of Death.

Give me thy hand, I pray ; for never more 90

Shall I return to earth when once the fire

Shall have consumed me. Never shall we take

Counsel together, living, as we sit

Apart from our companions ; the hard fate

Appointed me at birth hath drawn me down. 95

Thou too, O godlike man, wilt fall beneath

The ramparts of the noble sons of Troy.

Yet this I ask, and if thou wilt obey,

This I command thee, — not to let my bones

Be laid apart from thine. As we were reared 100

Under thy roof together, from the time

When first Menœtius brought thee, yet a boy,

From Opus, where I caused a sorrowful death ;—

For by my hand, when wrangling at the dice,

Another boy, son of Amphidamas, 105

Was slain without design, — and Peleus made

His halls my home, and reared me tenderly,

And made me thy companion ;— so at last

May one receptacle, the golden vase  
Given by thy gracious mother, hold our bones." 110

The swift Achilles answered : " O most loved  
And honored, wherefore art thou come, and why  
Dost thou command me thus? I shall fulfil  
Obediently thy wish ; yet draw thou near,  
And let us give at least a brief embrace, 115  
And so indulge our grief." He said, and stretched  
His longing arms to clasp the shade. In vain ;  
Away like smoke it went, with gibbering cry,  
Down to the earth. Achilles sprang upright,  
Astonished, clapped his hands, and sadly said : — 120

" Surely there dwell within the realm below  
Both soul and form, though bodiless. All night  
Hath stood the spirit of my hapless friend  
Patroclus near me, sad and sorrowful,  
And asking many duties at my hands, 125  
A marvellous semblance of the living man."

He spake, and moved the hearts of all to grief  
And lamentation. Rosy-fingered Morn  
Dawned on them as around the hapless dead  
They stood and wept. Then Agamemnon sent 130  
In haste from all the tents the mules and men  
To gather wood, and summoned to the task  
Meriones, himself a gallant chief,  
Attendant on the brave Idomeneus.  
These went with woodmen's axes and with ropes 135  
Well twisted, and before them went the mules.  
O'er steep, o'er glen, by straight, by winding ways,

They journeyed till they reached the woodland wilds  
Of Ida fresh with springs, and quickly felled  
With the keen steel the towering oaks that came <sup>140</sup>  
Crashing to earth. Then, splitting the great trunks,  
They bound them on the mules, that beat the earth  
With hasty footsteps through the tangled wood,  
Impatient for the plain. Each woodcutter  
Shouldered a tree, for so Meriones, <sup>145</sup>  
Companion of the brave Idomeneus,  
Commanded, and at last they laid them down  
In order on the shore, where Peleus' son  
Planned that a mighty sepulchre should rise  
Both for his friend Patroclus and himself. <sup>150</sup>

So brought they to the spot vast heaps of wood,  
And sat them down, a numerous crowd. But then  
Achilles bade his valiant Myrmidons  
Put on their brazen mail and yoke their steeds.  
At once they rose, and put their harness on, <sup>155</sup>  
And they who fought from chariots climbed their  
seats  
With those who reined the steeds. These led the  
van,

And after them a cloud of men on foot  
By thousands followed. In the midst was borne  
Patroclus by his comrades. Cutting off <sup>160</sup>  
Their hair, they strewed it, covering the dead.  
Behind the corpse, Achilles in his hands  
Sustained the head, and wept, for on that day  
He gave to Hades his most cherished friend.

Now when they reached the spot which Peleus'  
son

165

Had chosen, they laid down the dead, and piled  
The wood around him, while the swift of foot,  
The great Achilles, bent on other thoughts,  
Standing apart, cut off his amber hair,  
Which for the river Sperchius he had long  
Nourished to ample growth, and, sighing, turned  
His eyes upon the dark-blue sea, and said :—

170

“Sperchius, in vain my father made a vow  
That I, returning to my native shore,  
Should bring my hair, an offering to thee,  
And slay a consecrated hecatomb,  
And burn a sacrifice of fifty rams,  
Beside the springs where in a sacred field  
Thy fragrant altar stands. Such was the vow  
Made by the aged man, yet hast thou not  
Fulfilled his wish. And now, since I no more  
Shall see my native land, the land I love,  
Let the slain hero bear these locks away.”

175

180

He spake, and in his dear companion's hands  
He placed the hair, and all around were moved  
To deeper grief ; the setting sun had left  
The host lamenting, had not Peleus' son  
Addressed Atrides, standing at his side :—

185

“Atrides, thou whose word the Greeks obey  
Most readily, all mourning has an end.  
Dismiss the people from the pyre to take  
Their evening meal, while we with whom it rests

190

To pay these mournful duties to the dead  
Will close the rites ; but let the chiefs remain."

This when the monarch Agamemnon heard, 195  
Instantly he dismissed to their good ships  
The people. They who had the dead in charge  
Remained, and heaped the wood, and built a pyre  
A hundred feet each way from side to side. 199  
With sorrowful hearts they raised and laid the corpse  
Upon the summit. Then they flayed and dressed  
Before it many fatlings of the flock,  
And oxen with curved feet and crooked horns.  
From these magnanimous Achilles took  
The fat, and covered with it carefully 205  
The dead from head to foot. Beside the bier,  
And leaning toward it, jars of honey and oil  
He placed, and flung, with many a deep-drawn sigh,  
Twelve high-necked steeds upon the pile. Nine  
hounds

There were, which from the table of the prince 210  
Were daily fed ; of these Achilles struck  
The heads from two, and laid them on the wood,  
And after these, and last, twelve gallant sons  
Of the brave Trojans, butchered by the sword ;  
For he was bent on evil. To the pile 215  
He put the iron violence of fire,  
And, wailing, called by name the friend he loved :—

" Rejoice, Patroclus, even in the land  
Of souls. Lo ! I perform the vow I made ;  
Twelve gallant sons of the brave men of Troy 220

The fire consumes with thee. For Hector's corse,  
The flames shall not devour it, but the dogs."

Such was his threat ; but Hector was not made  
The prey of dogs, for Venus, born to Jove,  
Drave off by night and day the ravenous tribe, 225  
And with a rosy and ambrosial oil  
Anointed him, that he might not be torn  
When dragged along the earth. Above the spot  
And all around it, where the body lay,  
Phœbus Apollo drew a veil of clouds 230  
Reaching from heaven, that on his limbs the flesh  
And sinews might not stiffen in the sun.

The flame seized not upon the funeral pile  
Of the dead chief. Pelides, swift of foot,  
Bethought him of another rite. He stood 235  
Apart, and offered vows to the two winds,  
Boreas and Zephyr. Promising to bring  
Fair offerings to their shrines, and pouring out  
Libations from a golden cup, he prayed  
That they would haste and wrap the pile in flames,  
And burn the dead to ashes. At his prayer 241  
Fleet Iris on a message to the Winds  
Took instant wing. They sat within the halls  
Of murmuring Zephyr, at a solemn feast.  
There Iris lighted on the threshold-stone. 245  
As soon as they beheld her, each arose  
And bade her sit beside him. She refused  
To seat her at the banquet, and replied :—

“ Not now ; for I again must take my way

Over the ocean currents to the land  
Where dwell the Æthiopians, who adore  
The gods with hecatombs, to take my share  
Of sacrifice. Achilles supplicates,  
With promise of munificent offerings,  
Boreas and sounding Zephyrus to come 255  
And blow the funeral structure into flames  
On which, bewailed by all the Grecian host,  
Patroclus lies, and waits to be consumed."

So spake she, and departed. Suddenly  
Arose the Winds with tumult, driving on 260  
The clouds before them. Soon they reached the  
deep ;

Beneath the violence of their sounding breath  
The billows heaved. They swept the fertile fields  
Of Troas, and descended on the pyre,  
And mightily it blazed with fearful roar. 265  
All night they howled and tossed the flames. All  
night

Stood swift Achilles, holding in his hand  
A double beaker ; from a golden jar  
He dipped the wine, and poured it forth, and steeped  
The earth around, and called upon the soul 270  
Of his unhappy friend. As one laments  
A newly married son upon whose corse  
The flames are feeding, and whose death has made  
His parents wretched, so did Peleus' son,  
Burning the body of his comrade, mourn, 275  
As round the pyre he moved with frequent sighs.

Now when the star that ushers in the day  
Appeared, and after it the morning, clad  
In saffron robes, had overspread the sea,  
The pyre sank wasted, and the flames arose 280  
No longer, and the Winds, departing, flew  
Homeward across the Thracian sea, which tossed  
And roared with swollen billows as they went.  
And now Pelides from the pyre apart  
Weary lay down, and gentle slumber soon 285  
Came stealing over him. Meantime the Greeks  
Gathered round Agamemnon, and the stir  
And bustle of their coming woke the chief,  
Who sat upright and thus addressed his friends :—  
“Atrides, and all ye who lead the hosts 290  
Of Greece ! our task is, first to quench the pyre  
With dark red wine where'er the flames have spread,  
And next to gather, with discerning care,  
The bones of Menœtiades. And these  
May well be known ; for in the middle space 295  
He lay, and round about him, and apart  
Upon the border, were the rest consumed, —  
The bodies of the captives and the steeds.  
Be his enclosed within a golden vase,  
And wrapped around with caul, a double fold, 300  
Till I too pass into the realm of Death.  
And be a tomb not over-spacious reared,  
But of becoming size, which afterward  
Ye whom we leave behind in our good ships,  
When we are gone, will build more broad and high.”

So spake the swift Pelides, and the chiefs 306  
Complied ; and first they quenched with dark red  
wine

The pyre, where'er the flames had spread, and where  
Lay the deep ashes ; then, with many tears,  
Gathered the white bones of their gentle friend, 312  
And laid them in a golden vase, wrapped round  
With caul, a double fold. Within the tents  
They placed them softly, wrapped in delicate lawn,  
Then drew a circle for the sepulchre,  
And, laying its foundations to enclose 315  
The pyre, they heaped the earth, and, having reared  
A mound, withdrew. Achilles yet detained  
The multitude, and made them all sit down,  
A vast assembly. From the ships he brought  
The prizes, — caldrons, tripods, steeds, and mules,  
Oxen in sturdy pairs, and graceful maids, 321  
And shining steel. Then for the swiftest steeds  
A princely prize he offered first, — a maid  
Of peerless form, and skilled in household arts,  
And a two-handled tripod of a size 325  
For two-and-twenty measures. He gave out  
The second prize, — a mare unbroken yet,  
Of six years old, and pregnant with a mule.  
For the third winner in the race he staked  
A caldron that had never felt the fire, 330  
Holding four measures, beautiful, and yet  
Untarnished. For the fourth, he offered gold,  
Two talents. For the fifth, and last, remained

A double vessel never touched by fire.  
He rose and stood, and thus addressed the  
Greeks : — 335

“ Atrides, and ye other well-armed Greeks,  
These prizes lie within the chariot-course,  
And wait the charioteers. Were but these games  
In honor of another, then would I  
Contend, and win and carry to my tent 340  
The first among these prizes. For my steeds,  
Ye know, surpass the rest in speed, since they  
Are of immortal birth, by Neptune given  
To Peleus, and by him in turn bestowed  
On me his son. But I and they will keep 345  
Aloof; they miss their skilful charioteer,  
Who washed in limpid water from the fount  
Their manes, and moistened them with softening oil.  
And now they mourn their friend, and sadly stand  
With drooping heads and manes that touch the  
ground. 350

Let such of you as trust in their swift steeds  
And their strong cars prepare to join the games.”

Pelides spake : the abler charioteers  
Arose, and, first of all, the king of men,  
Eumelus, eminent in horsemanship, 355  
The dear son of Admetus. Then arose  
The valiant son of Tydeus, Diomed,  
And led beneath the yoke the Trojan steeds  
Won from Æneas when Apollo saved  
That chief from death. The son of Atreus next, 360

The noble Menelaus, yellow-haired,  
 Brought two swift coursers underneath the yoke,  
 King Agamemnon's Æthè, and with her  
 His own Podargus. Echepolus once,  
 Anchises' son, sent Æthè as a gift 369  
 To Agamemnon, that he might be free  
 From following with the army to the heights  
 Of Ilium, and enjoy the ease he loved ;  
 For Jove had given him wealth, and he abode  
 On Sicyon's plains. Now, eager for the race, 370  
 She took the yoke. Antilochus, the fourth,  
 The gallant son of the magnanimous king,  
 Neleian Nestor, harnessed next his steeds  
 With stately manes. Swift coursers that were foaled  
 At Pylus drew his chariot. To his side 375  
 His father came and stood, and spake and gave  
 Wise counsels, though the youth himself was wise :—

“Antilochus, I cannot doubt that Jove  
 And Neptune both have loved thee, teaching thee,  
 Young as thou art, all feats of horsemanship. 380  
 Small is the need to instruct thee. Thou dost know  
 Well how to turn the goal, and yet thy steeds  
 Are slow, and ill for thee may be the event.  
 Their steeds are swift, yet have they never learned  
 To govern them with greater skill than thou. 385  
 Now then, dear son, bethink thee heedfully  
 Of all precautions, lest thou miss the prize.  
 By skill the woodman, rather than by strength,  
 Brings down the oak ; by skill the pilot guides

His wind-tossed galley over the dark sea ; 390  
 And thus by skill the charioteer o'ercomes  
 His rival. He who trusts too much his steeds  
 And chariot lets them veer from side to side  
 Along the course, nor keeps a steady rein  
 Straight on, while one expert in horsemanship, 395  
 Though drawn by slower horses, carefully  
 Observes the goal, and closely passes it,  
 Nor fails to know how soon to turn his course,  
 Drawing the leathern reins, and steadily  
 Keeps on, and watches him who goes before. 400  
 Now must I show the goal which, easily  
 Discerned, will not escape thine eye. It stands  
 An ell above the ground, a sapless post,  
 Of oak or larch, — a wood of slow decay  
 By rain, and at its foot on either side 405  
 Lies a white stone ; there narrow is the way,  
 But level is the race-course all around.  
 The monument it is of one long dead,  
 Or haply it has been in former days  
 A goal, as the swift-footed Peleus' son 410  
 Has now appointed it. Approach it near,  
 Driving thy chariot close upon its foot,  
 Then in thy seat lean gently to the left  
 And cheer the right-hand horse, and ply the lash,  
 And give him a loose rein, yet firmly keep 415  
 The left-hand courser close beside the goal, —  
 So close that the wheel's nave may seem to touch  
 The summit of the post ; yet strike thou not

The stone beside it, lest thou laine thy steeds  
And break the chariot, to thy own disgrace 420  
And laughter of the others. My dear son,  
Be on thy guard ; for if thou pass the goal  
Before the rest, no man in the pursuit  
Can overtake or pass thee, though he drave  
The noble courser of Adrastus, named 425  
Arion the swift-footed, which a god  
Bade spring to life, or those of matchless speed  
Reared here in Ilium by Laomedon."

Neleian Nestor spake, and, having thus  
Given all the needful cautions, took his seat 430  
In his own place. Meriones, the fifth,  
Harnessed his steeds with stately manes, and all  
Mounted their chariots. Lots were cast ; the son  
Of Peleus shook the helmet, and the lot  
Of Nestor's son, Antilochus, leaped forth ; 435  
And next the lot of King Eumelus came ;  
And Menelaus, mighty with the spear,  
Had the third lot ; Meriones was next ;  
And to the bravest of them all, the son  
Of Tydeus, fell the final lot and place. 440  
They stood in order, while Achilles showed  
The goal far off upon the level plain,  
And near it, as the umpire of the race,  
He placed the godlike Phoenix, who had been  
His father's armor-bearer, to observe 445  
With judging eye, and bring a true report.

All raised at once the lash above their steeds,

And smote them with the reins, and cheered them on  
With vehement cries. Across the plain they swept,  
Far from the fleet ; beneath them rose the dust, 450  
A cloud, a tempest, and their tossing manes  
Were lifted by the wind. And now the cars  
Touched earth, and now were flung into the air.  
Erect the drivers stood, with beating hearts,  
Eager for victory, each encouraging 455  
His steeds, that flew beneath the shroud of dust.

But when they turned their course, and swiftly ran  
Back to the hoary deep to close the course,  
Well did the skill of every chief appear.  
They put their horses to the utmost speed, 460  
And then did the quick-footed steeds that drew  
Eumelus bear him on beyond the rest.  
But with his Trojan coursers Diomed  
Came next, so near it seemed that they would mount  
The car before them, and upon the back 465  
And ample shoulders of Eumelus smote  
Their steaming breath ; for as they ran their heads  
Leaned over him. And then would Diomed  
Have passed him by, or would at least have made  
The victory doubtful, had not Phœbus struck, 470  
In his displeasure, from the hero's hand  
The shining scourge. It fell, and to his eyes  
Started indignant tears ; for now he saw  
The others gaining on him, while the speed  
Of his own steeds, which feared the lash no more, 475  
Was slackened. Yet Apollo's stratagem

Was not unseen by Pallas, who o'ertook  
 The shepherd of the people, and restored  
 The scourge he dropped, and put into his steeds  
 New spirit. In her anger she approached 480  
 Eumelus, snapped his yoke, and caused his mares  
 To start asunder from the track ; the pole  
 Was dashed into the ground, and from the seat  
 The chief was flung beside the wheel, his mouth,  
 Elbows, and nostrils torn, his forehead bruised. 485  
 Grief filled his eyes with tears and choked his voice,  
 While Diomed drave by his firm-paced steeds,  
 Outstripping all the rest ; for Pallas nerved  
 Their limbs with vigor, and bestowed on him  
 Abundant glory. After him the son 490  
 Of Atreus, fair-haired Menelaus, came,  
 While Nestor's son cheered on his father's steeds : —  
 “ On, on ! press onward with your utmost speed !  
 Not that I bid you strive against the steeds  
 Of warlike Diomed, for Pallas gives 495  
 Swiftness to them and glory to the man  
 Who holds the reins ; but let us overtake  
 The horses of Atrides, nor submit  
 To be thus distanced, lest the victory  
 Of the mare *Æthè* cover you with shame. 500  
 Fleet as ye are, why linger ? This at least  
 I tell you, and my words will be fulfilled :  
 Look not for kindly care at Nestor's hands,  
 That shepherd of the people, but for death  
 With the sharp steel, if through your fault we take 505

A meaner prize. Then onward and away,  
 With all your strength, for this is my design, —  
 To pass by Menelaus where the way  
 Is narrow, and he cannot thwart my plan.”

He spake, and they who feared their master's  
 threat

510

Mended their speed awhile. The warlike son  
 Of Nestor saw just then the narrow pass  
 Within the hollow way, a furrow ploughed  
 By winter floods, which there had torn the course  
 And deepened it. Atrides, to avoid

515

The clash of wheels, drave thither ; thither too  
 Antilochus — who turned his firm-paced steeds  
 A little from the track in which they ran —  
 Followed him close. Atrides saw with fear,  
 And shouted to Antilochus aloud : —

520

“Antilochus, thou drivest rashly ; rein  
 Thy horses in. The way is narrow here,  
 But soon will broaden, and thou then canst pass.  
 Beware lest with thy chariot-wheels thou dash  
 Against my own, and harm befall us both.”

525

He spake ; but all the more Antilochus  
 Urged on his coursers with the lash, as if  
 He had not heard. As far as flies a quoit  
 Thrown from the shoulder of a vigorous youth  
 Who tries his strength, so far they ran abreast.  
 The horses of Atrides then fell back ;  
 He slacked the reins ; for much he feared the steeds  
 Would dash against each other in the way,

530

And overturn the sumptuous cars, and fling  
The charioteers contending for the prize 535  
Upon the dusty track. With angry words  
The fair-haired Menelaus chided thus :—

“Antilochus, there is no man so prone  
As thou to mischief, and we greatly err,  
We Greeks, who call thee wise. Go now, and yet  
Thou shalt not take the prize without an oath.” 541

Again he spake, encouraging his steeds :  
“Check not your speed, nor sorrowfully stand :  
Their feet and knees will fail with weariness  
Before your own ; they are no longer young.” 545

He spake ; the coursers, honoring his voice,  
Ran with fresh speed, and soon were near to those  
Of Nestor’s son. Meantime the assembled Greeks  
Sat looking where the horses scoured the plain  
And filled the air with dust. Idomeneus, 550  
The lord of Crete, descried the coursers first,  
For on a height he sat above the crowd.

He heard the chief encouraging his steeds,  
And knew him, and he marked before the rest  
A courser, chestnut-colored save a spot 555  
Upon the middle of the forehead, white,  
And round as the full moon. And then he stood  
Upright, and from his place harangued the Greeks :—

“O friends, the chiefs and leaders of the Greeks,  
Am I the sole one that describes the steeds, 560  
Or do ye also? Those who lead the race,  
I think, are not the same, and with them comes

A different charioteer. The mares, which late  
Were foremost, may have somewhere come to harm.  
I saw them first to turn the goal, and now 565  
I can no more discern them, though my sight  
Sweeps the whole Trojan plain from side to side.  
Either the charioteer has dropped the reins,  
And could not duly round the goal, or else  
Met with disaster at the turn, o'erthrown, 570  
His chariot broken, and the affrighted mares  
Darting, unmastered, madly from the way.  
But rise : look forth yourselves. I cannot well  
Discern, but think the charioteer is one  
Who, born of an Ætolian stock, commands 575  
Among the Argives, — valiant Diomed,  
A son of Tydeus, tamer of wild steeds.”

And Ajax, swift of foot, Oïleus' son,  
Answered with bitter words : “ Idomeneus,  
Why this perpetual prating? Far away 580  
The mares with rapid hoofs are traversing  
The plain, and thou art not the youngest here  
Among the Argives, nor hast such sharp eyes  
Beneath thy brows, yet must thou chatter still.  
Among thy betters here it ill becomes 585  
A man like thee to be so free of tongue.  
The coursers of Eumelus, which at first  
Outran the rest, are yet before them all,  
And he is drawing near and holds the reins.”

The Cretan leader angrily rejoined : 590  
“ Ajax, thou railer, first in brawls, yet known

As in all else below the other Greeks,  
A man of brutal mood, come, let us stake  
A tripod or a caldron, and appoint  
As umpire Agamemnon, to decide 595  
Which horses are the foremost in the race,  
That when thou lovest thou mayst be convinced."

He spake : Oilean Ajax, swift of foot,  
Started in anger from his seat, to cast  
Reproaches back, and long and fierce had been 600  
The quarrel if Achilles had not risen,  
And said : " No longer let this strife go on,  
Idomeneus and Ajax ! Ill such words  
Become you ; ye would blame in other men  
What now ye do. Sit then among the rest, 605  
And watch the race ; for soon the charioteers  
Contending for the victory will be here,  
And each of you — for well ye know the steeds  
Of the Greek chieftains — for himself will see  
Whose hold the second place, and whose are first."

He spake : Tydides rapidly drew near, 611  
Lashing the shoulders of his steeds, and they  
Seemed in the air as, to complete the course,  
They flew along, and flung the dust they trod  
Back on the charioteer. All bright with tin 615  
And gold, the car rolled after them ; its tires  
Made but a slender trace in the light dust,  
So rapidly they ran. And now he stopped  
Within the circle, while his steeds were steeped  
In sweat, that fell in drops from neck and breast. 620

Then from his shining seat he leaped, and laid  
His scourge against the yoke. Brave Sthenelus  
Came forward, and at once received the prize  
For Diomed, and bade his comrades lead  
The maid away, and in their arms bear off  
The tripod, while himself unyoked the steeds.

Next the Neleian chief, Antilochus,  
Came with his coursers. More by fraud than speed  
He distanced Menelaus, yet that chief  
Drave his fleet horses near him. Just so far 630  
As runs the wheel behind a steed that draws  
His master swiftly o'er the plain, his tail  
Touching the tire with its long hairs, and small  
The space between them as the spacious plain  
Is traversed, Menelaus just so far 635  
Was distanced by renowned Antilochus.  
For though at first he fell as far behind  
As a quoit's cast, yet was he gaining ground  
Rapidly, now that Agamemnon's mare,  
Æthè the stately-maned, increased her speed, 640  
And Menelaus, had the race for both  
Been longer, would have passed his rival by,  
Nor left the victory doubtful. After him,  
A spear's throw distant, came Meriones,  
The gallant comrade of Idomeneus, 645  
Whose full-maned steeds were slower than the rest,  
And he unskilled in contests such as these.  
And last of all Eumelus came. He drew  
His showy chariot after him, and drave

His steeds before him. Great Achilles saw . 650  
 With pity, and from where he stood among  
 The Greeks addressed him thus with wingèd  
 words :—

“The ablest horseman brings his steeds the last,  
 But let us, as is just, confer on him  
 The second prize ; Tydides takes the first.” 655

He spake, and all approved his words ; and now  
 The mare, to please the Greeks, had been bestowed  
 Upon Eumelus, if Antilochus,  
 Son of magnanimous Nestor, had not risen  
 To plead for justice with Achilles thus :— 660

“Achilles, I shall deem it grave offence  
 If thou fulfil thy word ; for thou wilt take  
 My prize, because thou seest that this man’s car  
 And his fleet steeds have suffered injury,  
 Though he be skilful. Yet he should have prayed  
 To the good gods ; then had he not been seen 666  
 Bringing his steeds the last. But if thou feel  
 Compassion for him, and if so thou please,  
 Large store of brass and gold is in thy tent,  
 And thine are cattle, and handmaidens thine, 670  
 And firm-paced steeds ; hereafter give of these  
 A nobler largess, or bestow it now,  
 And hear the Greeks applaud thee. But this prize  
 I yield not ; let the warrior who may claim  
 To take it try with me his strength of arm.” 675

He ceased : the noble son of Peleus smiled,  
 And, pleased to see Antilochus succeed, —

For he was a beloved friend, — he spake  
 These wingèd words : “ Since, then, Antiochus,  
 Thou wilt that I bestow some recompense 680  
 Upon Eumelus from my store, I give  
 The brazen corselet which my arm in war  
 Took from Asteropæus, edged around  
 With shining tin, — a gift of no mean price.”

He ceased, and sent his friend Automedon 685  
 To bring it from the tent. He went and brought  
 The corselet, and Eumelus joyfully  
 Received it from Achilles. Then arose,  
 Among them Menelaus, ill at ease,  
 And angry with Antiochus. He took 690  
 The sceptre from a herald’s hand, who hushed  
 The crowd to silence, and the hero spake : —

“ Antiochus, who wert till now discreet,  
 What hast thou done? Thou hast disgraced my  
 skill

And wronged my steeds by thrusting in thine own, 695  
 Which were less fleet, before them. Now, ye chiefs  
 And leaders of the Achaians, judge between  
 This man and me, and judge impartially,  
 Lest that some warrior of the Greeks should say  
 That Menelaus, having overcome 700  
 Antiochus by falsehood, led away  
 The mare a prize ; for his were slower steeds,  
 But he the mightier man in feats of arms.  
 Nay, I myself will judge ; and none of all  
 The Greeks will censure me, for what I do 705

Will be but just. Antilochus, step forth,  
 Illustrious as thou art, and in due form,  
 Standing before thy horses and thy car,  
 And taking in thy hand the pliant scourge  
 Which thou just now hast wielded, touch thy steeds,  
 And swear by Neptune, whose embrace surrounds 711  
 The earth, that thou hast wittingly employed  
 No stratagem to break my chariot's speed."

And thus discreet Antilochus replied :

"Have patience with me : I am younger far 715  
 Than thou, King Menelaus ; thou art both  
 My elder and my better. Thou dost know  
 The faults to which the young are ever prone ;  
 The will is quick to act, the judgment weak.  
 Bear with me then. The mare which I received 720  
 I cheerfully make over to thy hands.  
 And if thou wilt yet more of what I have,  
 I give it willingly and instantly,  
 Rather, O loved of Jove, than lose a place  
 In thy good-will, and sin against the gods." 725

The son of large-souled Nestor, speaking thus,  
 Led forth the mare, and gave her to the hand  
 Of Menelaus, o'er whose spirit came  
 A gladness. As upon a field of wheat  
 Bristling with ears gathers the freshening dew, 730  
 So was his spirit gladdened in his breast,  
 And he bespake the youth with wingèd words : —

"Antilochus, now shall my anger cease,  
 For hitherto thou hast not shown thyself

Foolish or fickle, though the heat of youth 735  
Just now hath led thee wrong. In time to come,  
Beware to practise stealthy arts on men  
Of higher rank than thou. No other Greek  
Would easily have made his peace with me.  
But thou hast suffered much, and much hast done, —  
Thou, and thy worthy father, and his son, 741  
Thy brother, — for my sake. I therefore yield  
To thy petition ; yet I give to thee  
The mare, though mine she be, that these who stand  
Around us may perceive that I am not 745  
Of unforgiving or unyielding mood.”

He spake, and to Noëmon gave the mare, —  
Noëmon, comrade of Antilochus, —  
To lead her thence, while for himself he took  
The shining caldron. Then Meriones, 750  
Fourth in the race, received the prize of gold, —  
Two talents. But the fifth prize and the last,  
The double goblet, still was left unclaimed ;  
And this Achilles carried through the crowd  
Of Greeks, and placed in Nestor’s hands, and  
said : — 755

“Receive thou this, O ancient man, to keep  
In memory of the funeral honors paid  
Patroclus, whom thou never more shalt see  
Among the Greeks. I give this prize, which thou  
Hast not contended for, since thou wilt wield 760  
No more the cestus, nor wilt wrestle more,  
Nor hurl the javelin at the mark, nor join

The foot-race ; age lies heavy on thy limbs."

He spake, and gave the prize, which Nestor took,  
Well pleased, and thus with wingèd words re-  
plied : —

765

"Son, thou hast spoken rightly, for these limbs  
Are strong no longer ; neither feet nor hands  
Move on each side with vigor as of yore.  
Would I were but as young, with strength as great,  
As when the Epeians in Buprasium laid  
King Amarynceus in the sepulchre,  
And funeral games were offered by his sons !  
Then of the Epeians there was none like me,  
Nor of the Pylian youths, nor yet among  
The brave Ætolians. In the boxing-match  
I took the prize from Clytomedes, son  
Of Enops, and in wrestling overcame  
Ancæus the Pleuronian, who rose up  
Against me. In the foot-race I outstripped,  
Fleet as he was, Iphiclus, and beyond  
Phyleus and Polydore I threw the spear.  
Only the sons of Actor won the race  
Against me with their chariot, and they won  
Through force of numbers. Much they envied me,  
And feared lest I should bear away the prize ;  
For largest in that contest of the steeds  
Was the reward, and they were two, — one held,  
Steadily held, the reins, the other swung  
The lash. Such was I once. Now feats like these  
Belong to other, younger men, and I,

770

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790

Though eminent among the heroes once,  
 Must do as sad old age admonishes.  
 Go thou, and honor thy friend's funeral  
 With games. Thy gift I willingly accept,  
 Rejoicing that thy thoughts revert to one 795  
 Who loves thee, and that thou forgettest not  
 To pay the honor due to me among  
 The Greeks. The gods will give thee thy reward."

He ceased. The son of Peleus, having heard  
 This praise from Nestor, left him, and passed  
 through 800

The mighty concourse of the Greeks. He laid  
 Before them prizes for the difficult strife  
 Between the boxers. To the middle space  
 He led a mule, and bound him, six years old  
 And strong for toil, unbroken and most hard 805  
 To break, while to the vanquished he assigned  
 A goblet. Rising, he addressed the host :—

"Ye sons of Atreus and ye well-armed Greeks,  
 We call for two of the most skilled to strive  
 For these, by striking with the lifted fist ; 810  
 And he to whom Apollo shall decree  
 The victory, acknowledged by you all,  
 Shall have this sturdy mule to lead away.  
 The vanquished takes this goblet as his meed."

He spake. A warrior strong and huge of limb,  
 Skilled in the cestus, named Epeius, son 816  
 Of Panopeus, rose at the word, and laid  
 His hand upon the sturdy mule, and said :—

"Let him appear whose lot will be to take  
 The goblet. No man of the Grecian host 820  
 Will get the mule by overcoming me  
 In combat with the cestus, — so I deem.  
 In that I claim to be the best man here.  
 And should it not suffice that in the war  
 Others surpass me? All cannot excel 825  
 In everything alike. I promise this,  
 And shall fulfil my word, — that I will crush  
 His body, and will break his bones. His friends  
 Should all remain upon the ground to bear  
 Their comrade off when beaten by my hand." 830

He spake, and all were silent. Only rose  
 Euryalus, whose father was the king  
 Mecisteus of Talaïon's line, the same  
 Who went to Thebes and overcame, of old,  
 In all the funeral games of Œdipus, 835  
 The sons of Cadmus. To Euryalus  
 Came Diomed, the spearman, bidding him  
 Expect the victory which he greatly wished  
 His friend might gain. Around his waist he drew  
 A girdle, adding straps that from the hide 840  
 Of a wild bull were cut with dextrous care.  
 And, fully now arrayed, the twain stepped forth  
 Into the middle space, and both began  
 The combat. Lifting their strong arms, they  
     brought  
 Their heavy hands together. Fearfully 845  
 Was heard the crash of jaws ; from every limb

The sweat was streaming. As Euryalus  
Looked round, his noble adversary sprang  
And smote him on the cheek, — too rude a blow  
To be withstood ; his shapely limbs gave way 850  
Beneath him. As upon the weedy shore,  
When the fresh north wind stirs the water's face,  
A fish leaps forth to light, and then again  
The dark wave covers it, so sprang and fell  
The chief. Magnanimous Epeius gave 855  
His hands and raised him up ; his friends came  
round

And led him thence with dragging feet, and head  
That drooped from side to side, while from his  
mouth

Came clotted blood. They placed him in the midst,  
Unconscious still, and sent and took the cup. 860

Then, third in order, for the wrestling-match  
The son of Peleus brought and showed the Greeks  
Yet other prizes. To the conqueror  
A tripod for the hearth, of ample size,  
He offered ; twice six oxen, as the Greeks 865  
Esteemed it, were its price. And next he placed  
In view a damsel for the vanquished, trained  
In household arts ; four beeves were deemed her  
price.

Then rose Achilles, and addressed the Greeks :  
“ Ye who would try your fortune in this strife, 870  
Arise.” He spake, and mighty Ajax rose,  
The son of Telamon, and after him

The wise Ulysses, trained to stratagems.

'They, girding up their loins, came forth and stood  
In the mid space, and there with vigorous arms <sup>875</sup>  
They clasped each other, locked like rafters framed  
By some wise builder for the lofty roof  
Of a great mansion proof against the winds.  
Then their backs creaked beneath the powerful  
strain

Of their strong hands ; the sweat ran down their  
limbs ; 880

Large wheelks upon their sides and shoulders rose,  
Crimson with blood. Still eagerly they strove  
For victory and the tripod. Yet in vain  
Ulysses labored to supplant his foe,  
And throw him to the ground, and equally 885  
Did Ajax strive in vain, for with sheer strength  
Ulysses foiled his efforts. When they saw  
That the Greeks wearied of the spectacle,  
The mighty Telamonian Ajax said : —

“ Son of Laertes, nobly born and trained 890  
To wise expedients, lift me up, or I  
Will lift up thee ; and leave the rest to Jove.”

He spake, and raised Ulysses from the ground,  
Who dealt, with ready stratagem, a blow  
Upon the ham of Ajax, and the limb 895  
Gave way ; the hero fell upon his back,  
And on his breast Ulysses, while the host  
Stood wondering and amazed. Ulysses strove,  
In turn, to lift his rival, but prevailed

Only to move him from his place ; he caught 900  
 The knee of Ajax in his own, and both  
 Came to the ground together, soiled with dust.  
 They rose to wrestle still, but from his seat  
 Achilles started, and forbade them thus : —

“ Contend no longer, nor exhaust your strength 905  
 With struggling ; there is victory for both,  
 And equal prizes. Now depart, and leave  
 The field of contest to the other Greeks.”

He spake : they listened and obeyed, and wiped  
 The dust away, and put their garments on. 910  
 And then the son of Peleus placed in sight  
 Prizes of swiftness, — a wrought silver cup  
 That held six measures, and in beauty far  
 Excelled all others known ; the cunning hands  
 Of the Sidonian artisans had given 915  
 Its graceful shape, and over the dark sea  
 Men of Phœnicia brought it, with their wares,  
 To the Greek harbors ; they bestowed it there  
 On Thoas. Afterward Euneüs, son  
 Of Jason, gave it to the hero-chief, 920  
 Patroclus, to redeem a captive friend,  
 Lycaon, Priam’s son. Achilles now  
 Brought it before the assembly as a prize,  
 For which, in honor of the friend he loved,  
 The swiftest runners of the host should strive. 925  
 Next, for the second in the race, he showed  
 A noble fatling ox ; and for the last,  
 Gold, half a talent. Then he stood and said

To the Achaians : "Those who would contend  
For these rewards, rise up." And then arose 930  
Oilean Ajax, fleet of foot ; and next  
Ulysses the sagacious ; last upstood  
Antilochus, the son of Nestor, known  
As swiftest of the youths. In due array  
They stood ; Achilles showed the goal. At once 935  
Forward they sprang. Oilean Ajax soon  
Gained on the rest, but close behind him ran  
The great Ulysses. As a shapely maid  
Flinging the shuttle draws with careful hand  
The thread that fills the warp, and so brings near 940  
The shuttle to her bosom, just so near  
To Ajax ran Ulysses, in the prints  
Made by his rival's feet, before the dust  
Fell back upon them. As he ran, his breath  
Smote on the head of Ajax. All the Greeks 945  
Shouted applause to him, encouraging  
His ardor for the victory ; but when now  
They neared the goal, Ulysses silently  
Prayed thus to Pallas : "Goddess, hear my prayer,  
And help these feet to win." The goddess heard,  
And lightened all his limbs, his feet, his hands ; 951  
And just as they were rushing on the prize,  
Ajax, in running, slipped and fell — the work  
Of Pallas — where in heaps the refuse lay  
From entrails of the bellowing oxen slain 955  
In honor of Patroclus by the hand  
Of swift Achilles. Mouth and nostrils both

Were choked with filth. The much-enduring man  
 Ulysses, coming first, received the cup,  
 While Ajax took the ox, and as he stood 960  
 Holding the animal's horn and spitting forth  
 The dirt, he said to those around : "'T is plain  
 The goddess caused my feet to slide ; she aids  
 Ulysses like a mother." So he said,  
 And the Greeks laughed. And then Antilochus 965  
 Received the third reward, and with a smile  
 Said to the Greeks : " I tell you all, my friends,  
 What you must know already, that the gods  
 Honor the aged ever. Ajax stands  
 Somewhat in years above me, but this chief 970  
 Who takes the prize is of a former age  
 And earlier race of men ; they call him old,  
 But hard it were for any Greek to vie  
 With him in swiftness, save Achilles here."

Such praise he gave Pelides, fleet of foot, 975  
 Who answered : " Thy good word, Antilochus,  
 Shall not be vainly spoken. I will add  
 Yet half a talent to thy gold." He said,  
 And gave the gold ; Antilochus, well pleased,  
 Received it. Then Pelides brought a spear 980  
 Of ponderous length into the middle space,  
 And laid it down, and placed a buckler near  
 And helmet, which had been Sarpedon's arms,  
 And which Patroclus won of him in war.

Then stood Achilles and addressed the Greeks :—

" I call on two, the bravest of the host, 986

To arm themselves and take their spears in hand,  
And in a contest for these weapons put  
Each other to the proof. Whoever first  
Shall wound his adversary, piercing through 999  
The armor to the delicate skin beneath,  
And draw the crimson blood, to him I give  
This beautiful sword of Thrace, with silver studs,  
Won from Asteropæus. And let both  
Bear off these arms, a common gift, and both 995  
Shall sit and banquet nobly in my tent."

He spake, and Telamonian Ajax rose,  
The large of limb ; Tydides Diomed,  
The strong, rose also. When they had put on  
Their arms apart from all the host, they came, 1000  
All eager for the combat, to the lists,  
And fearful was their aspect. All the Greeks  
Looked on with dread and wonder, and when now  
Stood face to face the warriors, thrice they rushed  
Against each other ; thrice they dealt their blows. 1005  
Then Ajax thrust through Diomed's round shield  
His weapon, but it wounded not ; the mail  
Beyond it stopped the stroke. Tydides aimed  
Over his adversary's mighty shield  
A blow to reach his neck. The Greeks, alarmed 1010  
For Ajax, shouted that the strife should cease,  
And both divide the prize. Achilles heard,  
But gave to Diomed the ponderous sword,  
Its sheath, and the fair belt from which it hung.

Again Pelides placed before the host 1015

A mass of iron, shapeless from the forge,  
Which once the strong Eëtion used to hurl ;  
But swift Achilles, when he took his life,  
Brought it with other booty in his ships  
To Troas. Rising, he addressed the Greeks : — 1020

“ Stand forth, whoever will contend for this,  
And if broad fields and rich be his, this mass  
Will last him many years. The man who tends  
His flocks, or guides his plough, need not be sent  
To town for iron ; he will have it here.” 1025

He spake, and warlike Polypœtes rose.  
Uprose the strong Leonteus, who in form  
Was like a god. The son of Telamon  
Rose also, and Epeius nobly born ;  
Each took his place. Epeius seized the mass, 1030  
And sent it whirling. All the Achaians laughed.  
The loved of Mars, Leonteus, flung it next,  
And after him the son of Telamon,  
The large-limbed Ajax, from his vigorous arm  
Sent it beyond the mark of both. But when 1035  
The sturdy warrior Polypœtes took  
The mass in hand, as far as o’er his beeves  
A herdsman sends his whirling staff, so far  
This cast outdid the rest. A shout arose ;  
The friends of sturdy Polypœtes took 1040  
The prize, and bore it to the hollow ships.

Achilles for the archers brought forth steel,  
Tempered for arrow-heads, — ten axes, each  
With double edge, and single axes ten, —

And from a galley's azure prow took off 1045  
A mast, and reared it on the sands afar,  
And, tying to its summit by the foot  
A timorous dove, he bade them aim at her :  
" Whoever strikes the bird shall bear away  
The double axes to his tent ; while he 1050  
Who hits the cord, but not the bird, shall take  
The single axes, as the humbler prize."

He ceased, and then arose the stalwart king,  
Teucer ; then also rose Meriones,  
The valiant comrade of Idomeneus. 1055  
The lots were shaken in a brazen helm,  
And Teucer's lot was first. He straightway sent  
A shaft with all his strength, but made no vow  
Of a choice hecatomb of firstling lambs  
To Phœbus, monarch-god. He missed the bird, 1060  
Such was the will of Phœbus, but he struck,  
Close to her foot, the cord that made her fast.  
The keen shaft severed it ; the dove flew up  
Into the heavens ; the fillet dropped to earth  
Amid the loud applauses of the Greeks. 1065  
And then Meriones made haste to take  
The bow from Teucer's hand. Long time he held  
The arrow aimed, the while he made a vow  
To Phœbus, the great archer, promising  
A chosen hecatomb of firstling lambs ; 1070  
Then, looking toward the dove, as high in air  
She wheeled beneath the clouds, he pierced her  
breast

Beneath the wing ; the shaft went through and fell,  
Fixed in the ground, beside Meriones,  
While the bird settled on the galley's mast 1075  
With drooping head and open wings. The breath  
Forsook her soon, and down from that high perch  
She fell to earth. The people all looked on,  
Admiring and amazed. Meriones  
Took up the double axes as his prize, 1080  
While Teucer bore the others to the fleet.

And then Pelides brought into the midst  
A ponderous spear, and laid a caldron down  
Which never felt the fire, inwrought with flowers,  
Its price an ox. And then the spearmen rose. 1085  
Atides Agamemnon, mighty king,  
First rose, and after him Meriones,  
The brave companion of Idomeneus ;  
And thus to both the swift Achilles said : —

“O son of Atreus, for we know how far 1090  
Thou dost excel all others, and dost cast  
The spear with passing strength and skill, bear thou  
This prize, as victor, to the roomy ships,  
And if it please thee, let us, as I wish,  
Give to our brave Meriones the spear.” 1095

He spake, and Agamemnon, king of men,  
Complied, and gave Meriones in hand  
The brazen spear, while to Talthybius,  
The herald, he consigned the greater prize

## BOOK XXIV.

THE assembly was dissolved, the people all  
Dispersed to their swift galleys, and prepared  
With food and gentle slumber to refresh  
Their wearied frames. But still Achilles wept,  
Remembering his dear comrade. Sleep, whose  
sway 5  
Is over all, came not ; he turned and tossed,  
Still yearning for his strong and valiant friend  
Patroclus. All that they had ever done  
Together, all the hardships they had borne,  
The battles fought with heroes, the wild seas 10  
O'erpassed, came thronging on his memory.  
He shed warm tears, as now upon his sides,  
Now on his back, now on his face he lay.  
Then, starting from his couch, he wandered forth  
In sorrow by the margin of the deep. 15  
Nor did the morn that rose o'er sea and shore  
Dawn unperceived by him ; for then he yoked  
His fleet steeds to the chariot, and made fast  
The corse of Hector, that it might be dragged  
After the wheels. Three times around the tomb 20  
Of Menœtiades he dragged the slain,  
Then turned and sought his tent, again to rest,  
And left him there stretched out amid the dust  
With the face downward. Yet Apollo, moved

With pity for the hero, kept him free 25  
 From soil or stain, though dead, and o'er him held  
 The golden ægis, lest, when roughly dragged  
 Along the ground, the body might be torn.

So in his anger did Achilles treat  
 Unworthily the noble Hector's corse. 30  
 The blessed gods themselves with pity looked  
 Upon the slain, and bade the vigilant one,  
 The Argus-queller, bear him thence by stealth.  
 This counsel pleased the immortals all, except  
 Juno and Neptune and the blue-eyed maid, 35  
 And these persisted in their wrath. To them  
 Ilium, the hallowed city, and its king,  
 Priam, and all his people, from the first  
 Were hateful ; 't was for Alexander's fault,  
 Affronting the two goddesses what time 40  
 They sought his cottage, and preferring her  
 Who ministered to his calamitous love.  
 But now, when the twelfth morning from that day  
 Arose, Apollo spake among the gods :—

“Cruel are ye, O gods, and prone to wrong. 45  
 For was not Hector wont before your shrines  
 To burn the thighs of chosen bulls and goats?  
 And now that he is dead ye venture not  
 To rescue him, and let his wife and son  
 And mother and King Priam look again 50  
 Upon his face. Soon would they light the pile,  
 And burn the dead, and pay the funeral rite.  
 Ye seek to favor, O ye gods, that pest

Achilles, in whose breast there dwells no love  
Of justice, nor a temper to be moved 55  
By prayers, but who delights in savage deeds.  
And as a lion, conscious of vast strength  
And scornful of resistance, falls upon  
The shepherd's flock, and slays for his repast,  
Thus with Achilles neither mercy dwells 60  
Nor shame, which often profits, often harms  
Mankind. For when another man has met  
A greater grief than he, — has lost, perchance,  
A brother or a son, — he dries at length  
His tears, and ceases to lament ; for fate 65  
Bestows the power to suffer patiently.  
But this Achilles, after he has spoiled  
The godlike Hector of his life in war,  
Hath bound him to his chariot, and hath dragged  
The corse around his dear companion's tomb. 70  
Unseemly is the deed, and small will be  
The good it brings him. Brave although he be.  
We may be angry with him when he thus  
Insults a portion of insensible earth."

The white-armed Juno was incensed, and spake :  
"So mightst thou say, God of the silver bow, 75  
Were equal honor to Achilles due  
And Hector. Hector is a mortal man,  
And suckled at a woman's breast. Not so  
Achilles ; he was born of one of us, 80  
A goddess whom I nurtured and brought up  
And gave to Peleus. Ye were present all,

Ye gods, when they were wedded. Thou wert there  
To share the marriage banquet, harp in hand,  
Thou plotter with the vile, thou faithless one !” 85

Then answered cloud-compelling Jove, and said :  
“ Let not thy anger rise against the gods,  
O Juno, for the honor of the chiefs  
Shall not be equal. Yet of all the race  
Of mortals dwelling in the city of Troy 90  
Was Hector dearest to the gods ; to me  
He ever was ; and never did he fail  
To offer welcome gifts. My altar ne’er  
Lacked fitting feast, libation, and the fume  
Of incense, — hallowed rites which are our due. 95  
Yet seek we not to steal away the corse  
Of valiant Hector ; that we could not do  
Without his slayer’s knowledge, who by night  
And day is ever near to him and keeps  
Watch o’er him like a mother. Let some god 100  
Call hither Thetis. I will counsel her  
Prudently, that Achilles may receive  
Ransom from Priam, and restore his son.”

He ceased, and with the swiftness of the storm  
Rose Iris up, to be his messenger. 105  
Half-way ’twixt Samos and the rugged coast  
Of Imbrus down she plunged to the dark sea,  
Entering the deep with noise. Far down she sank  
As sinks the ball of lead, that, sliding o’er  
A wild bull’s horn, bears into ocean’s depths 110  
Death to the greedy fishes. There she found

Thetis within her roomy cave, among  
The goddesses of ocean, seated round  
In full assembly. Thetis in the midst  
Bewailed the fate of her own blameless son, 115  
About to perish on the fertile soil  
Of Troy, and far from Greece. The swift of wing,  
Iris, approached her and addressed her thus : —

“ Arise, O Thetis. Father Jupiter,  
Whose counsel stands forever, sends for thee.” 120

And silver-footed Thetis answered him :  
“ Why should that potent deity require  
My presence, who have many griefs, and shrink  
From mingling with immortals? Yet I go,  
Perforce, for never doth he speak in vain.” 125

So spake the goddess-queen, and, speaking, took  
Her mantle, — darker web was never worn, —  
And onward went. Wind-footed Iris led  
The way ; the waters of the sea withdrew  
On either side. They climbed the steepy shore, 130  
And took their way to heaven. They found the son  
Of Saturn, him of the far-sounding voice,  
With all the blessed, ever-living gods  
Assembled round him. Close to Father Jove  
She took her seat, for Pallas yielded it, 135  
And Juno put a beautiful cup of gold  
Into her hand, and spake consoling words.  
She drank and gave it back, and thus began  
The father of immortals and of men : —

“ Thou comest to Olympus, though in grief, 140

O goddess Thetis, and I know the cause  
That makes thee sad and will not from thy thoughts ;  
Yet let me now declare why I have called  
Thee hither. For nine days the immortal gods  
Have been at strife concerning Hector's corse 145  
And Peleus' son, the spoiler. They have asked  
The vigilant Argus-queller to remove  
The dead by stealth. But I must yet bestow  
Fresh honor on Achilles, and thus keep  
Thy love and reverence. Now descend at once 150  
Into the camp and carry to thy son  
My message : say that it offends the gods,  
And me the most, that in his spite he keeps  
The corse of Hector at the beakèd ships,  
Refusing to restore it. He perchance 155  
Will listen, and, revering me, give back  
The slain. And I will send a messenger,  
Iris, to large-souled Priam, bidding him  
Hasten in person to the Grecian fleet,  
To ransom his beloved son, and bring 160  
Achilles gifts that shall appease his rage."

He spake : the goddess of the silver feet,  
Thetis, obeyed, and with precipitate flight  
Descended from the mountain-peaks. She came  
To her son's tent, and found him uttering moans 165  
Continually, while his beloved friends  
Were busy round him ; they prepared a feast,  
And had just slain within the tent a ewe  
Of ample size and fleece. She took her seat 169

Beside her son, and smoothed his brow, and said : —

“How long, my son, wilt thou lament and grieve  
And pine at heart, abstaining from the feast  
And from thy couch? Yet well it is to seek  
A woman’s love. Thy life will not be spared  
Long time to me, for death and cruel fate 175  
Stand near thee. Listen to me ; I am come  
A messenger from Jove, who bids me say  
The immortals are offended, and himself  
The most, that thou shouldst in thy spite detain  
The corse of Hector at the beakèd ships, 180  
Refusing its release. Comply thou then,  
And take the ransom and restore the dead.”

And thus Achilles, swift of foot, replied :

“Let him who brings the ransom come and take  
The body, if it be the will of Jove.” 185

Thus did the mother and the son confer  
Among the galleys, and between them passed  
Full many a wingèd word, while Saturn’s son  
Bade Iris go with speed to sacred Troy : —

“Fleet Iris, haste thee. Leave the Olympian  
seats, 190

And send magnanimous Priam to the fleet,  
To ransom his dear son, and bear him back  
To Ilium. Let him carry gifts to calm  
The anger of Achilles. He should go  
Alone, no Trojan with him, save a man 195  
In years, a herald, who may guide the mules  
And strong-wheeled chariot, harnessed to bear back

Him whom the great Achilles has o'erthrown ;  
And let him fear not death nor other harm,  
For we will send a guide to lead him safe, 200  
The Argus-queller, till he stand beside  
Achilles ; and when once he comes within  
The warrior's tent, Achilles will not raise  
His hand to slay, but will restrain the rest.  
Nor mad, nor rash, nor criminal is he, 205  
And will humanely spare a suppliant man."

He spake, and Iris, the swift messenger,  
Whose feet are like the wind, went forth with speed,  
And came to Priam's palace, where she found  
Sorrow and wailing. Round the father sat 210  
His sons within the hall, and steeped with tears  
Their garments. In the midst the aged man  
Sat with a cloak wrapped round him, and much dust  
Strewn on his head and neck, which, when he rolled  
Upon the earth, he gathered with his hands. 215  
His daughters and the consorts of his sons  
Filled with their cries the mansion, sorrowing  
For those, the many and brave, who now lay slain  
By Grecian hands. The ambassadress of Jove  
Stood beside Priam, and in soft, low tones, 220  
While his limbs shook with fear, addressed him  
thus : —

"Be comforted, and have no fear ; for I  
Am come, Dardanian Priam, not to bring  
Mischief, but blessing. I am sent to thee  
A messenger from Jove, who, though afar, 225

Pities thee and will aid thee. He who rules  
Olympus bids thee ransom thy slain son,  
The noble Hector, carrying gifts to calm  
The anger of Achilles. Thou shouldst go  
Alone, no Trojan with thee, save a man 230  
In years, a herald, who shall guide the mules  
And strong-wheeled chariot, harnessed to bring back  
Him whom the great Achilles has o'erthrown.  
And have no fear of death or other harm ;  
A guide shall go with thee to lead thee safe, 235  
The Argus-queller, till thou stand beside  
Achilles, and when once thou art within  
The warrior's tent, Achilles will not raise  
His hand to slay, but will restrain the rest.  
He is not mad, nor rash, nor prone to crime, 240  
And will humanely spare a suppliant man."

Thus the swift-footed Iris spake, and then  
Departed. Priam bade his sons prepare  
The strong-wheeled chariot, drawn by mules, and  
bind

A coffer on it. He descended next 245  
Into a fragrant chamber, cedar-lined,  
High-roofed, and stored with many things of price,  
And calling Hecuba, his wife, he said :—

"Dear wife, a message from Olympian Jove  
Commands that I betake me to the fleet, 250  
And thence redeem my slaughtered son with gifts  
That may appease Achilles. Tell me now  
How this may seem to thee? for I am moved

By a strong impulse to approach the ships,  
And venture into the great Grecian camp." 255

He spake : his consort wept, and answered thus :  
" Ah me ! the prudence which was once so praised  
By strangers and by those who own thy sway,  
Where is it now ? Why wouldst thou go alone  
To the Greek fleet, to meet the eye of him 260  
Who slew so many of thy gallant sons ?  
An iron heart is thine. If that false man,  
Remorseless as he is, should see thee there  
And seize thee, neither pity nor respect  
Hast thou to hope from him. Let us lament 265  
Our Hector in these halls. A cruel fate  
Spun, when I brought him forth, his thread of life, —  
That far from us his corse should feed the hounds  
Near that fierce man, whose liver I could tear  
From out his bosom. Then the indignities 270  
Done to my son would be repaid, for he  
Was slain, not shunning combat, coward-like,  
But fighting to defend the men of Troy  
And the deep-bosomed Trojan dames. He fell  
Without a thought of flight or of retreat." 275

And thus the aged, godlike king rejoined :  
" Keep me not back from going, nor be thou  
A bird of evil omen in these halls,  
For thou shalt not persuade me. This I say :  
If any of the dwellers of the earth, 280  
Soothsayer, seer, or priest, had said to me  
What I have heard, I well might deem the words

A lie, and heed them not. But since I heard  
 Myself the mandate from a deity,  
 And saw her face to face, I certainly 285  
 Will go, nor shall the message be in vain.  
 And should it be my fate to perish there  
 Beside the galleys of the mail-clad Greeks,  
 So be it ; for Achilles will forthwith  
 Put me to death embracing my poor son, 290  
 And satisfying my desire to weep."

He spake, and, raising the fair coffer-lids,  
 Took out twelve robes of state most beautiful,  
 Twelve single cloaks, as many tapestried mats,  
 And tunics next and mantles twelve of each, 295  
 And ten whole talents of pure gold, which first  
 He weighed. Two burnished tripods from his store  
 He added, and four goblets and a cup  
 Of eminent beauty, which the men of Thrace  
 Gave him when, as an envoy to their coast, 300  
 He came from Troy, — a sumptuous gift, and yet  
 The aged king reserved not even this  
 To deck his palace, such was his desire  
 To ransom his dear son. And then he drave  
 Away the Trojans hovering round his porch, 305  
 Rebuking them with sharp and bitter words :—

"Hence with you, worthless wretches! have ye  
 not

Sorrow enough at home, that ye are come  
 To vex me thus? Or doth it seem to you  
 Of little moment, that Saturnian Jove 310

Hath sent such grief upon me in the loss  
 Of my most valiant son? Ye yet will know  
 How great that loss has been ; for it will be  
 A lighter task for the beleaguering Greeks  
 To work our ruin, now that he is dead. 315  
 But I shall sink to Hades ere mine eyes  
 Behold the city sacked and made a spoil."

He spake, and with his staff he chased away  
 'The loiterers ; forth before the aged man  
 They went. With like harsh words he chid his sons.  
 Helenus, Paris, noble Agathon, 321  
 Pammon, Antiphonus, Deiphobus,  
 Polites, great in war, Hippothoüs,  
 And gallant Dios, nine in all he called,  
 And thus bespake them with reproachful words : —

" Make haste, ye idle fellows, my disgrace ! 326  
 Would ye had all been slain beside the fleet  
 Instead of Hector ! Woe is me ! the most  
 Unhappy of mankind am I, who had  
 The bravest sons in all the town of Troy, 330  
 And none of them, I think, are left to me.  
 Mestor, divine in presence, Troilus,  
 The gallant knight, and Hector, he who looked  
 A god among his countrymen, — no son  
 Of man he seemed, but of immortal birth, — 335  
 Those Mars has slain, but these who are my shame  
 Remain, — these liars, dancers, excellent  
 In choirs, whose trade is public robbery  
 Of lambs and kids. Why haste ye not to get

My chariot ready, and bestow these things      340  
Within it, that my journey may begin?"

He spake, and they, in fear of his rebuke,  
Lifted from out its place the strong-wheeled car,  
Framed to be drawn by mules, and beautiful,  
And newly built, and on it they made fast.      345  
The coffer. From its pin they next took down  
The boxwood mule-yoke, fitted well with rings,  
And carved with a smooth boss. With this they  
brought

A yoke-band nine ells long, which carefully  
Adjusting to the polished pole's far end,      350  
They cast the ring upon the bolt, and thrice  
Wound the long band on each side of the bolt  
Around the yoke, and made it fast, and turned  
The loose ends under. Then they carried forth  
The treasures that should ransom Hector's corse ; 355  
And having piled them in the polished car,  
They yoked the hardy, strong-hoofed mules which  
once

The Mysians gave to Priam, princely gifts.  
To bear the yoke of Priam they led forth  
The horses which the aged man himself      360  
Fed at the polished manger. These the king  
Yoked, aided by the herald, while in mind,  
Within the palace court, they both revolved  
Their prudent counsels. Hecuba, the queen,  
Came to them in deep sorrow. In her hand      365  
She bore a golden cup of delicate wine,

That they might make libations and depart.  
 She stood before the steeds, and thus she spake :—

“Take this, and pour to Father Jove, and pray  
 That thou mayst safely leave the enemy’s camp 370  
 For home, since ’t is thy will, though I dissuade,  
 To go among the ships. Implore thou then  
 The god of Ida and the gatherer  
 Of the black tempest, Saturn’s son, who looks  
 Down on all Troy, to send his messenger, 375  
 His swift and favorite bird, of matchless strength,  
 On thy right hand, that, with thine eye on him,  
 Thou mayst with courage journey to the ships  
 Of the Greek horsemen. But if Jupiter  
 All-seeing should withhold his messenger, 380  
 I cannot bid thee, eager as thou art,  
 Adventure near the galleys of the Greeks.”

And thus the godlike Priam made reply :  
 “Dear wife, indeed, I will not disobey  
 Thy counsel ; meet it is to raise our hands 385  
 To Jove, and ask him to be merciful.”

He spake, and bade the attendant handmaid pour  
 Pure water on his hands, for near him stood  
 A maid who came and held a basin forth  
 And ewer. When his hands were washed, he took  
 The goblet from the queen, and then, in prayer, 391  
 Stood in the middle of the court, and poured  
 The wine, and, looking heavenward, spake aloud :—

“O Father Jove, most glorious and most great,  
 Who rulest all from Ida, let me find 395

Favor and pity with Achilles. Send  
A messenger, thy own swift, favorite bird,  
Of matchless strength, on my right hand, that I,  
Beholding him, may confidently pass  
To where the fleet of the Greek horsemen lies !” 400

Thus in his prayer he spake, and Jupiter,  
The All-disposer, hearkened, and sent forth  
An eagle, bird of surest augury,  
Named the Black Chaser, and by others called  
Percnos, with wings as broad as is the door 405  
Skilfully fashioned for the lofty hall  
Of some rich man, and fastened with a bolt.  
Such ample wings he spread on either side  
As townward on the right they saw him fly.  
They saw and they rejoiced ; their hearts grew light  
Within their bosoms. Then the aged king 411  
Hastened to mount the polished car, and drave  
Through vestibule and echoing porch. The mules,  
Harnessed to draw the four-wheeled car, went first,  
Driven by the sage Idæus ; after them, 415  
The horses, urged by Priam with the lash  
Rapidly through the city. All his friends  
Followed lamenting, as for one who went  
To meet his death. And now when they had reached  
The plain descending from the town, the sons 420  
And sons-in-law of Priam all returned  
To Ilium, and the twain proceeded on,  
Yet not unmarked by all-beholding Jove,  
Who, moved with pity for the aged man,

Turned to his well-beloved son and said :— 425

“Hermes, who more than any other god  
Delightest to consort with human kind,  
And willingly dost listen to their prayers,  
Haste, guide King Priam to the Grecian fleet,  
Yet so that none may see him, and no Greek 430  
Know of his coming, till he stand before  
Pelides.” Thus he spake: the messenger  
Who slew the Argus hearkened and obeyed ;  
And hastily beneath his feet he bound  
The fair, ambrosial, golden sandals worn 435  
To bear him over ocean like the wind,  
And o’er the boundless land. His wand he took  
Wherewith he seals in sleep the eyes of men,  
And opens them at will. With this in hand,  
The mighty Argus-queller flew, and soon 440  
Was at the Troad and the Hellespont.

Like to some royal stripling seemed the god,  
In youth’s first prime, when youth has most of grace.  
And there the Trojans twain, when they had passed  
The tomb of Ilus, halted with their mules 445  
And horses, that the beasts might drink the stream ;  
For twilight now was creeping o’er the earth.  
The herald looked, and saw that Mercury  
Was near, and thus, addressing Priam, said :—

“Be on thy guard, O son of Dardanus, 450  
For here is cause for wariness. I see  
A warrior, and I think he seeks our lives.  
Now let us urge our steeds and fly, or else

Descend and clasp his knees, and sue for grace."

He spake, and greatly was the aged king 455  
Bewildered by his words ; with hair erect  
He stood, and motionless, while Mercury  
Drew near, and took the old man's hand, and  
asked : —

"Whither, O father, guidest thou thy mules  
And steeds in the dim night, while others sleep? 460  
Fearest thou nothing from the warlike Greeks,  
Thy foes, who hate thee, and are near at hand?  
Should one of them behold thee bearing off  
These treasures in the swiftly darkening night,  
What wouldst thou do? Thou art not young, and he  
Who comes with thee is old ; ye could not make 465  
Defence against the foe. Fear nought from me,  
And I will save thee, since thou art so like  
To my own father, from all other harm."

Priam, the godlike ancient, answered thus : 470  
"Thou sayest true, dear son ; but sure some god  
Holds over me his kind, protecting hand,  
Who sends a guide like thee to join me here,  
So noble art thou both in form and air,  
And gracious are thy thoughts, and blessed they 475  
Who gave thee birth." With that the messenger,  
The Argus-queller, spake again, and said :  
"Most wisely hast thou spoken, aged man.  
But tell, and truly, why thou bearest hence  
This store of treasures among stranger men? 480  
Is it that they may be preserved for thee?

Or are ye all deserting in alarm  
 Your hallowed Troy ? for such a man of might  
 Was thy brave son who died, that I may say  
 The Greeks in battle had no braver man." 485

And Priam, godlike ancient, spake in turn :  
 " Who then art thou, and of what parents born,  
 Excellent youth, who dost in such kind words  
 Speak of the death of my unhappy son ? "

The herald, Argus-queller, answered him : 490  
 " I see that thou wouldst prove me, aged man,  
 By questions touching Hector, whom I oft  
 Have seen with mine own eyes in glorious fight,  
 Putting the Greeks to rout and slaying them  
 By their swift ships with that sharp spear of his. 495  
 We stood and marvelled, for Achilles, wroth  
 With Agamemnon, would not suffer us  
 To join the combat. I attend on him ;  
 The same good galley brought us to this shore,  
 And I am one among his Myrmidons. 500

Polyctor is my father, who is rich,  
 And now as old as thou. Six are his sons  
 Beside me, I the seventh. In casting lots  
 With them, it fell to me that I should come  
 To Ilium with Achilles. I am here 505  
 In coming from the fleet, for with the dawn  
 The dark-eyed Greeks are planning to renew  
 The war around the city. They have grown  
 Impatient of long idleness ; their chiefs  
 Seek vainly to restrain their warlike rage." 510

Then spake the godlike ancient, Priam, thus :  
 "If thou indeed dost serve Pelides, tell,  
 And truly tell me, whether yet my son  
 Is at the fleet, or has Achilles cast,  
 Torn limb from limb, his body to the hounds ?" 515

The herald, Argus-queller, thus replied :  
 "O aged monarch, neither have the hounds  
 Devoured thy son, nor yet the birds of prey ;  
 But near the galleys of Achilles still  
 He lies neglected and among the tents. 520  
 Twelve mornings have beheld him lying there,  
 Nor hath corruption touched him, nor the worms  
 That make the slain their feast begun to feed.  
 'T is true that, when the holy morning dawns  
 Achilles drags him fiercely round the tomb 525  
 Of his dear friend ; yet that disfigures not  
 The dead. Shouldst thou approach him, thou  
 wouldst see

With marvelling eyes how fresh and dewy still  
 The body lies, the blood all cleansed away,  
 Unsoiled in every part, and all the wounds 530  
 Closed up wherever made ; for many a spear  
 Was thrust into his sides. Thus tenderly  
 The blessed gods regard thy son, though dead,  
 For dearly was he loved by them in life."

He spake ; the aged man was comforted, 535  
 And said : "'T is meet, O son, that we should pay  
 Oblations to the immortals ; for my son  
 While yet alive neglected not within

His palace the due worship of the gods  
 Who dwell upon Olympus ; therefore they 540  
 Are mindful of him, even after death.  
 Take this magnificent goblet ; be my guard.  
 And guide me, by the favor of the gods,  
 Until I reach Pelides in his tent."

Again the herald, Argus-quelier, spake : 545  
 "Thou seekest yet to try me, aged man,  
 Who younger am than thou. Yet think thou not  
 That I, without the knowledge of my chief,  
 Will take thy gifts ; for in my heart I fear  
 Achilles, nor would wrong him in the least, 550  
 Lest evil come upon me. Yet I go  
 Willingly with thee, as thy faithful guide.  
 Were it as far as Argos the renowned,  
 In a swift galley, or on foot by land,  
 Yet none would dare to harm thee while with me."

So Hermes spake, and leaped into the car, 556  
 And took into his hands the lash and reins,  
 And breathed into the horses and the mules  
 Fresh vigor. Coming to the wall and trench  
 About the ships, they found the guard engaged 560  
 With their night-meal. The herald Argicide  
 Poured sleep upon them all, and quickly flung  
 The gates apart, and pushed aside the bars,  
 And led in Priam, with the costly gifts  
 Heaped on the car. They went until they reached  
 The lofty tent in which Achilles sat, 566  
 Reared by the Myrmidons to lodge their king,

With timbers of hewn fir, and over-roofed  
 With thatch, for which the meadows had been mown,  
 And fenced for safety round with rows of stakes. 570  
 One fir-tree bar made fast its gate, which three  
 Strong Greeks were wont to raise aloft, and three  
 Were needed to take down the massive beam.

Achilles wielded the vast weight alone ;  
 Beneficent Hermes opened it before 575  
 The aged man, and brought the treasures in,  
 Designed for swift Achilles. Then he left  
 The car and stood upon the ground, and said :—

“O aged monarch, I am Mercury,  
 An ever-living god ; my father, Jove, 580  
 Bade me attend thy journey. I shall now  
 Return, nor must Achilles look on me ;  
 It is not meet that an immortal god  
 Should openly befriend a mortal man.  
 Enter, approach Pelides, clasp his knees ; 585  
 Entreat him by his father, and his son,  
 And fair-haired mother ; so shall he be moved.”

Thus having spoken, Hermes took his way  
 Back to the Olympian summit. Priam then  
 Sprang from the chariot to the ground. He left 590  
 Idæus there to guard the steeds and mules,  
 And, hastening to the tent where, dear to Jove,  
 Achilles lodged, he found the chief within,  
 While his companions sat apart, save two, —  
 Automedon the brave, and Alcimus, 595  
 Who claimed descent from Mars. These stood  
 near by,

And ministered to Peleus' son, who then  
Was closing a repast, and had just left  
The food and wine, and still the table stood.  
Unmarked the royal Priam entered in, 600  
And, coming to Achilles, clasped his knees,  
And kissed those fearful slaughter-dealing hands,  
By which so many of his sons had died.  
And as, when some blood-guilty man, whose hand  
In his own land has slain a fellow-man, 605  
Flees to another country, and the abode  
Of some great chieftain, all men look on him  
Astonished, — so, when godlike Priam first  
Was seen, Achilles was amazed, and all  
Looked on each other, wondering at the sight. 610  
And thus King Priam supplicating spake : —

“Think of thy father, an old man like me,  
Godlike Achilles ! On the dreary verge  
Of closing life he stands, and even now  
Haply is fiercely pressed by those who dwell 615  
Around him, and has none to shield his age  
From war and its disasters. Yet his heart  
Rejoices when he hears thou yet dost live,  
And every day he hopes that his dear son  
Will come again from Troy. My lot is hard, 620  
For I was father of the bravest sons  
In all wide Troy, and none are left me now.  
Fifty were with me when the men of Greece  
Arrived upon our coast ; nineteen of these  
Owned the same mother, and the rest were born 625

Within my palaces. Remorseless Mars  
Already had laid lifeless most of these,  
And Hector, whom I cherished most, whose arm  
Defended both our city and ourselves,  
Him didst thou lately slay while combating 630  
For his dear country. For his sake I come  
To the Greek fleet, and to redeem his corse  
I bring uncounted ransom. O, revere  
The gods, Achilles, and be merciful,  
Calling to mind thy father ! happier he 635  
Than I ; for I have borne what no man else  
That dwells on earth could bear, — have laid my lips  
Upon the hand of him who slew my son.”  
He spake : Achilles sorrowfully thought  
Of his own father. By the hand he took 640  
The suppliant, and with gentle force removed  
The old man from him. Both in memory  
Of those they loved were weeping. The old king,  
With many tears, and rolling in the dust  
Before Achilles, mourned his gallant son. 645  
Achilles sorrowed for his father’s sake,  
And then bewailed Patroclus, and the sound  
Of lamentation filled the tent. At last  
Achilles, when he felt his heart relieved  
By tears, and that strong grief had spent its force, 650  
Sprang from his seat ; then lifting by the hand  
The aged man, and pitying his white head  
And his white chin, he spake these wingèd words : —  
“ Great have thy sufferings been, unhappy king !

How couldst thou venture to approach alone 655  
The Grecian fleet, and show thyself to him  
Who slew so many of thy valiant sons?  
An iron heart is thine. But seat thyself,  
And let us, though afflicted grievously,  
Allow our woes to sleep awhile, for grief 660  
Indulged can bring no good. The gods ordain  
The lot of man to suffer, while themselves  
Are free from care. Beside Jove's threshold stand  
Two casks of gifts for man. One cask contains  
The evil, one the good, and he to whom 665  
The Thunderer gives them mingled sometimes falls  
Into misfortune, and is sometimes crowned  
With blessings. But the man to whom he gives  
The evil only stands a mark exposed  
To wrong, and, chased by grim calamity, 670  
Wanders the teeming earth, alike unloved  
By gods and men. So did the gods bestow  
Munificent gifts on Peleus from his birth,  
For eminent was he among mankind  
For wealth and plenty ; o'er the Myrmidons 675  
He ruled, and, though a mortal, he was given  
A goddess for a wife. Yet did the gods  
Add evil to the good, for not to him  
Was born a family of kingly sons  
Within his house, successors to his reign. 680  
One short-lived son is his, nor am I there  
To cherish him in his old age ; but here  
Do I remain, far from my native land,

In Troy, and causing grief to thee and thine.  
Of thee too, aged king, they speak, as one 685  
Whose wealth was large in former days, when all  
That Lesbos, seat of Macar, owns was thine,  
And all in Phrygia and the shores that bound  
The Hellespont ; men said thou didst excel  
All others in thy riches and thy sons. 690  
But since the gods have brought this strife on thee  
War and perpetual slaughter of brave men  
Are round thy city. Yet be firm of heart,  
Nor grieve forever. Sorrow for thy son  
Will profit nought ; it cannot bring the dead 695  
To life again, and while thou dost afflict  
Thyself for him fresh woes may fall on thee."

And thus the godlike Priam, aged king,  
Made answer : " Bid me not be seated here,  
Nursling of Jove, while Hector lies among 700  
Thy tents unburied. Let me ransom him  
At once, that I may look on him once more  
With my own eyes. Receive the many gifts  
We bring thee, and mayst thou possess them long,  
And reach thy native shore, since by thy grace 705  
I live and yet behold the light of day."

Achilles heard, and, frowning, thus rejoined :  
" Anger me not, old man ; 't was in my thought  
To let thee ransom Hector. To my tent  
The mother came who bore me, sent from Jove, 710  
The daughter of the Ancient of the Sea,  
And I perceive, nor can it be concealed,

O Priam, that some god hath guided thee  
To our swift galleys ; for no mortal man,  
Though in his prime of youthful strength, would dare  
To come into the camp ; he could not pass 716  
The guard, nor move the beams that bar our gates.  
So then remind me of my griefs no more,  
Lest, suppliant as thou art, I leave thee not  
Unharm'd, and thus transgress the laws of Jove." 720

He spake : the aged man in fear obeyed.  
And then Pelides like a lion leaped  
Forth from the door, yet not alone he went ;  
For of his comrades two — Automedon,  
The hero, and his comrade Alcimus, 725  
He whom Achilles held in most esteem  
After the slain Patroclus — followed him.  
The mules and horses they unyoked, and led  
The aged monarch's clear-voiced herald in,  
And bade him sit. Then from the polished car 730  
They took the costly ransom of the corse  
Of Hector, save two cloaks, which back they laid  
With a fair tunic, that their chief might give  
The body shrouded to be borne to Troy.  
And then he called the maidens, bidding them 735  
Wash and anoint the dead, yet far apart  
From Priam, lest, with looking on his son,  
The grief within his heart might rise uncurbed  
To anger, and Achilles in his rage  
Might stay him and transgress the laws of Jove. 740  
And when the handmaids finished, having washed

The body and anointed it with oil,  
And wrapped a sumptuous cloak and tunic round  
The limbs, Achilles lifted it himself  
And placed it on a bier. His comrades gave 743  
Their aid, and raised it to the polished car.  
When all was done, Achilles groaned, and called  
By name the friend he dearly loved, and said :—

“O my Patroclus, be not wroth with me  
Shouldst thou in Hades hear that I restore 750  
Hector to his dear father, since I take  
A ransom not unworthy ; but of this  
I yield to thee the portion justly thine.”

So spake the godlike warrior, and withdrew  
Into his tent, and took the princely seat 755  
From which he had arisen, opposite  
To that of Priam, whom he thus bespake :—

“Behold thy son is ransomed, aged man,  
As thou hast asked, and lies upon his bier.  
Thou shalt behold him with the early dawn, 760  
And bear him hence. Now let us break our fast,  
For even Niobe, the golden-haired,  
Refrained not from her food, though children twelve  
Perished within her palace, — six young sons  
And six fair daughters. Phœbus slew the sons 765  
With arrows from his silver bow, incensed  
At Niobe, while Dian, archer-queen,  
Struck down the daughters ; for the mother dared  
To make herself the peer of rosy-cheeked  
Latona, who, she boastfully proclaimed, 770

Had borne two children only, while herself  
Had brought forth many. Yet, though only two,  
The children of Latona took the lives  
Of all her own. Nine days the corpses lay  
In blood, and there was none to bury them, 775  
For Jove had changed the dwellers of the place  
To stone ; but on the tenth the gods of heaven  
Gave burial to the dead. Yet Niobe,  
Though spent with weeping long, did not refrain  
From food. And now forever mid the rocks 780  
And desert hills of Sipylus, where lie,  
Fame says, the couches of the goddess-nymphs,  
Who lead the dance where Acheloüs flows,  
Although she be transformed to stone, she broods  
Over the woes inflicted by the gods. 785  
But now, O noble Ancient, let us sit  
At our repast, and thou mayst afterward  
Mourn thy beloved son, while bearing him  
Homeward, to be bewailed with many tears."

Achilles, the swift-footed, spake, and left 790  
His seat, and, slaying a white sheep, he bade  
His comrades flay and dress it. Then they carved  
The flesh in portions which they fixed on spits,  
And roasted carefully, and drew them back.  
And then Automedon distributed 795  
The bread in shapely canisters around  
The table, while Achilles served the flesh,  
And all put forth their hands and shared the feast.  
But when their thirst and hunger were appeased,

Dardanian Priam fixed a wondering look 800  
Upon Achilles, who in nobleness  
Of form was like the gods. Achilles fixed  
A look of equal wonder on his guest,  
Dardanian Priam, for he much admired  
His gracious aspect and his pleasant speech. 805  
And when at length they both withdrew their gaze,  
Priam, the godlike Ancient, spake, and said : —

“Nursling of Jove, dismiss me speedily  
To rest, that we may lie, and be refreshed  
With gentle slumbers. Never have these eyes 810  
Been closed beneath their lids, since by thy hand  
My Hector lost his life ; and evermore  
I mourn and cherish all my griefs, and writhe  
Upon the ground within my palace courts ;  
But I have taken food at last, and drunk 815  
Draughts of red wine, untasted till this hour.”

Achilles bade the attending men and maids  
Place couches in the porch, and over them  
Draw sumptuous purple mats on which to lay  
Embroidered tapestries, and on each of these 820  
Spread a broad, fleecy mantle, covering all.  
Forth went the train with torches in their hands,  
And quickly spread two couches. Then the swift  
Achilles pleasantly to Priam said : —

“Sleep, excellent old man, without the tent, 820  
Lest some one of our counsellors arrive,  
Such as oft come within my tent to sit  
And talk of warlike matters. Seeing thee

In the dark hours of night, he might relate  
The tale to Agamemnon, king of men, 830  
And hinder thus the ransom of thy son.  
But say, and truly say, how many days  
Requiest thou to pay the funeral rites  
To noble Hector, so that I may rest  
As many, and restrain the troops from war." 835

Then answered godlike Priam, aged king :  
" Since, then, thou wilt, Achilles, that we pay  
The rites of burial to my noble son,  
I own the favor. Well thou knowest how  
We Trojans are constrained to keep within 840  
The city walls, for it is far to bring  
Wood from the mountains, and we fear to dare  
The journey. Nine days would we mourn the dead  
Within our dwellings, and upon the tenth  
Would bury him, and make a solemn feast, 845  
And the next day would rear his monument,  
And on the twelfth, if needful, fight again."

And swift Achilles, godlike chief, rejoined :  
" Be it, O reverend Priam, as thou wilt,  
And for that space will I delay the war." 850

He spake, and that the aged king might feel  
No fear, he grasped his right hand at the wrist ;  
And then King Priam and the herald went  
To sleep within the porch, but wary still.  
Achilles slumbered in his stately tent, 855  
The rosy-cheeked Briseis at his side,  
And all the other gods and men who fought

In chariots gave themselves to slumber, save  
Beneficent Hermes ; sleep came not to him,  
For still he meditated how to bring 860  
King Priam back from the Achaian fleet  
Unnoticed by the watchers at the gate.  
So at the monarch's head he stood, and spake : —

“O aged king, thou givest little heed  
To danger, sleeping thus amid thy foes, 865  
Because Achilles spares thee. Thou hast paid  
Large ransom for thy well-beloved son,  
And yet the sons whom thou hast left in Troy  
Would pay three times that ransom for thy life,  
Should Agamemnon, son of Atreus, learn — 870  
Or any of the Greeks — that thou art here.”

He spake : the aged king in fear awaked  
The herald. Hermes yoked the steeds and mules,  
And drave them quickly through the camp un-  
marked

By any there. But when they reached the ford 875  
Where Xanthus, progeny of Jupiter,  
Rolls the smooth eddies of his stream, the god  
Departed for the Olympian height, and Morn  
In saffron robes o'erspread the Earth with light. 879  
Townward they urged the steeds, and as they went  
Sorrowed and wailed : the mules conveyed the dead,  
And they were seen by none of all the men  
And graceful dames of Troy save one alone.  
Cassandra, beautiful as Venus, stood  
On Pergamus, and from its height discerned 885

Her father, standing on the chariot-seat,  
And knew the herald, him whose voice so oft  
Summoned the citizens, and knew the dead  
Stretched on a litter drawn by mules. She raised  
Her voice, and called to all the city thus : — 890

“O Trojan men and women, hasten forth  
To look on Hector, if ye e’er rejoiced  
To see him coming from the field alive,  
The pride of Troy, and all who dwell in her.”

She spake, and suddenly was neither man 895  
Nor woman left within the city bounds.

Deep grief was on them all ; they went to meet,  
Near to the gates, the monarch bringing home  
The dead. And first the wife whom Hector loved  
Rushed with his reverend mother to the car 900

As it rolled on, and, plucking out their hair,  
Touched with their hands the forehead of the dead,  
While round it pressed the multitude, and wept,  
And would have wept before the gates all day,  
Even to the set of sun, in bitter grief 905

For Hector’s loss, had not the aged man  
Addressed the people from his chariot-seat :

“Give place to me, and let the mules pass on,  
And ye may weep your fill when once the dead  
Is laid within the palace.” As he spake, 910

The throng gave way and let the chariot pass ;  
And having brought it to the royal halls,  
On a fair couch they laid the corse, and placed  
Singers beside it, leaders of the dirge,

Who sang a sorrowful, lamenting strain, 915  
And all the women answered it with sobs.  
White-armed Andromache in both her hands  
Took warlike Hector's head, and over it  
Began the lamentation midst them all : —

“Thou hast died young, my husband, leaving me  
In this thy home a widow, and one son, 921  
An infant yet. To an unhappy pair  
He owes his birth, and never will, I fear,  
Bloom into youth ; for ere that day will Troy  
Be overthrown, since thou, its chief defence, 925  
Art dead, the guardian of its walls and all  
Its noble matrons and its speechless babes,  
Yet to be carried captive far away,  
And I among them, in the hollow barks ;  
And thou, my son, wilt either go with me, 930  
Where thou shalt toil at menial tasks for some  
Pitiless master ; or perhaps some Greek  
Will seize thy little arm, and in his rage  
Will hurl thee from a tower and dash thee dead,  
Remembering how thy father, Hector, slew 935  
His brother, son, or father ; for the hand  
Of Hector forced full many a Greek to bite  
The dust of earth. Not slow to smite was he  
In the fierce conflict ; therefore all who dwell  
Within the city sorrow for his fall. 940  
Thou bringest an unutterable grief,  
O Hector, on thy parents, and on me  
The sharpest sorrows. Thou didst not stretch forth

Thy hands to me, in dying, from thy couch,  
 Nor speak a word to comfort me, which I 945  
 Might ever think of night and day with tears."

So spake the weeping wife : the women all  
 Mingled their wail with hers, and Hecuba  
 Took up the passionate lamentation next : —

"O Hector, thou who wert most fondly loved 950  
 Of all my sons ! While yet thou wert alive,  
 Dear wert thou to the gods, who even now,  
 When death has overtaken thee, bestow  
 Such care upon thee. All my other sons  
 Whom swift Achilles took in war he sold 955  
 At Samos, Imbrus, by the barren sea,  
 And Lemnos harborless. But as for thee,  
 When he had taken with his cruel spear  
 Thy life, he dragged thee round and round the tomb  
 Of his young friend, Patroclus, whom thy hand 960  
 Had slain, yet raised he not by this the dead ;  
 And now thou liest in the palace here,  
 Fresh and besprinkled as with early dew,  
 Like one just slain with silent arrows aimed  
 By Phœbus, bearer of the silver bow." 965

Weeping she spake, and woke in all who heard  
 Grief without measure. Helen, last of all,  
 Took up the lamentation, and began : —

"O Hector, who wert dearest to my heart  
 Of all my husband's brothers, — for the wife 970  
 Am I of godlike Paris, him whose fleet  
 Brought me to Troy, — would I had sooner died !

And now the twentieth year is past since first  
I came a stranger from my native shore,  
Yet have I never heard from thee a word 975  
Of anger or reproach. And when the sons  
Of Priam, and his daughters, and the wives  
Of Priam's sons, in all their fair array,  
Taunted me grievously, or Hecuba  
Herself, — for Priam ever was to me 980  
A gracious father, — thou didst take my part  
With kindly admonitions, and restrain  
Their tongues with soft address and gentle words.  
Therefore my heart is grieved, and I bewail  
Thee and myself at once, — unhappy me ! 985  
For now I have no friend in all wide Troy, —  
None to be kind to me : they hate me all.”

Weeping she spake : the mighty throng again  
Answered with wailing. Priam then addressed  
The people : “ Now bring wood, ye men of Troy, 990  
Into the city. Let there be no fear  
Of ambush from the Greeks, for when of late  
I left Achilles at the dark-hulled barks,  
He gave his promise to molest no more  
The men of Troy till the twelfth morn shall rise.” 995

He spake, and speedily they yoked the mules  
And oxen to the wains, and came in throngs  
Before the city walls. Nine days they toiled  
To bring the trunks of trees, and when the tenth  
Arose to light the abodes of men, they brought 1000  
The corse of valiant Hector from the town

With many tears, and laid it on the wood  
High up, and flung the fire to light the pile.

Now when the early rosy-fingered Dawn  
Looked forth, the people gathered round the pile 1005  
Of glorious Hector. When they all had come  
Together, first they quenched the funeral fires,  
Wherever they had spread, with dark-red wine,  
And then his brothers and companions searched  
For the white bones. In sorrow and in tears, 1010  
That streaming stained their cheeks, they gathered  
them,

And placed them in a golden urn. O'er this  
They drew a covering of soft purple robes,  
And laid it in a hollow grave, and piled  
Fragments of rock above it, many and huge. 1015  
In haste they reared the tomb, with sentries set  
On every side, lest all too soon the Greeks  
Should come in armor to renew the war.  
When now the tomb was built, the multitude  
Returned, and in the halls where Priam dwelt, 1020  
Nursling of Jove, were feasted royally.  
Such was the mighty Hector's burial rite.

THE END.

























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